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GEOGRAPHICAL MAGAZINE

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Explorers' Maps

III. Cathay or a New World? The Discovery of America from Columbus to Magellan

by R. A. SKELTON

We published in July and August 1953 the first two articles of this series by the Superintendent of the Map Room at the British Museum. They present, in regional order, some episodes in the history of exploration for which the evidence of maps is specially interesting or accessible. The text is to be read as a commentary on the maps and not as a connected history of discovery

Of the three parts into which the mediaeval world was divided, Asia was at once the largest and the most mysterious. It occupied the upper half of the circular diagrams in which Christian cosmographers depicted their world, and in Asia contemporary fancy located the marvels which it drew from travellers' tales, from theological dogma, and from classical or Biblical legend. Within its bounds lay the empires of the Great Khan and of Prester John; here were lands rich in spices and gold, and a harvest of souls ripe for conversion; in the remotest east was placed the Earthly Paradise.

In the 15th century, when developments in the art of navigation increased the range of sea voyages, the Far East was still the magnet for adventurers. The search for a sea route to Cathay was the motive which inspired the two major enterprises of the great age of discovery—the opening of a sea way into the Indian Ocean, and the discovery of America and the Pacific Ocean.

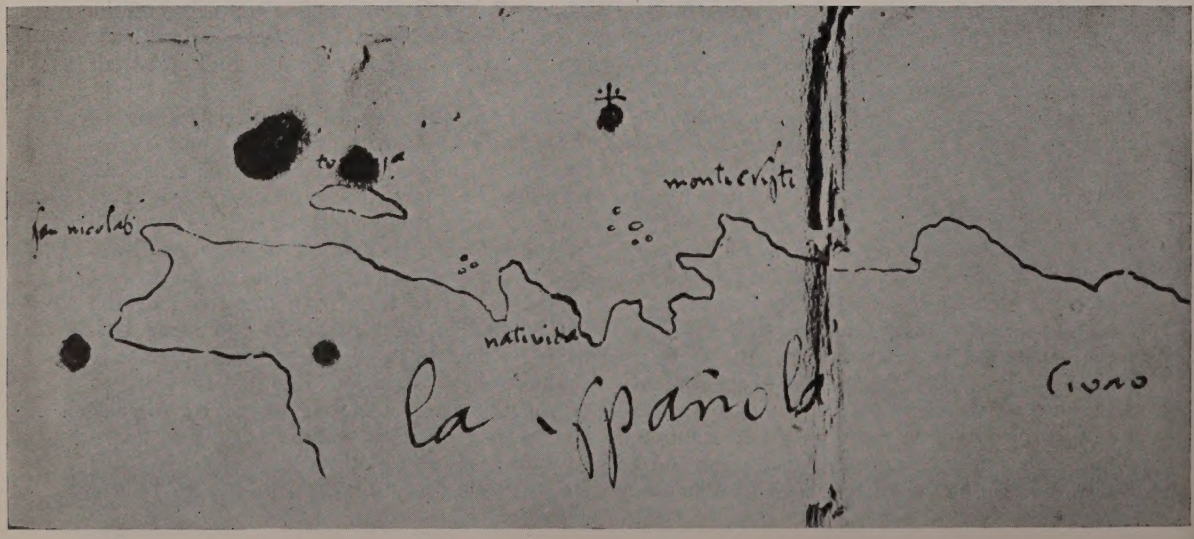
Neither of these conceptions was wholly new. That a ship could sail from the Atlantic into the Indian Ocean had been suspected as early as the 1st century A.D., and 15th-century mapmakers had indicated the passage by the southern part of Africa many years before it was rounded in 1488. Columbus was not the first European to look west to Cathay, nor was he the first to search for land westward of the Azores. The westerly sea route to China was apparent to anyone who examined a globe in which, as in that of Martin Behaim (1492), the easternmost and westernmost known lands were separated only by about 120° of sea. But to the interpretation of the geographical ideas and maps current in his day Columbus brought a fixity of purpose which, in the face of scientific orthodoxy, drove his project to its end, although not to that which he foresaw.

Columbus's objective has been the subject of voluminous, and largely idle, controversy. We need not doubt the arguments by which he recommended his plans to his patrons; King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella (he says) "acting on the information that I had given to your Highnesses touching the lands of India, and respecting a Prince who is called *Grand Can* . . . resolved to send me, Cristobal Colon, to the said parts of India . . . and ordered . . . that I should go by the west, whither up to this day we do not know for certain that anyone has gone." The maps which Columbus carried have not survived, but any seaman's chart drawn in Genoa (Fig. 1) would have shown him supposed islands in the Atlantic to serve as stepping-stones to the Indies. The largest and most westerly of these was Antillia, or the Isle of the Seven Cities, and this may have been Columbus's first objective, for we learn from his log that he and his captains constantly expected to run down islands in mid-Atlantic. But his ultimate goal was Marco Polo's Cathay and (1500 miles off its coast) the "island of Cipangu [Japan] . . . most fertile in gold, pearls and precious stones."

On both the wealth and the location of these lands Columbus apparently had his information, not directly from Marco Polo, but through the Florentine physician Paolo Toscanelli; and the chart which Toscanelli forwarded with his letter to Columbus represented Cipangu as 3000 nautical miles west of the Canaries (less than one-third of the true distance), and in about the same latitude. Columbus's problem was primarily that of sailing time, and it suited his purpose to shorten the projected voyage by making the largest credible estimate of the longitudinal extension of the old world. By using for this the highest figure (225°) to be got

All illustrations from the British Museum

(*Fig. 1*: above) *In this Genoese chart of 1456, the mythical islands of St Brandan extend northward of the Canaries, and out in the western ocean lies Antillia, which Columbus expected to touch on his first transatlantic voyage.* (*Fig. 2:* below) *A sketch of north-east Hispaniola, surmounted by his cypher, drawn by Columbus as he coasted east in 1492–93. The* Santa Maria *struck a reef on Christmas Day; and from its timbers he built at Natividad the first European settlement in the New World*



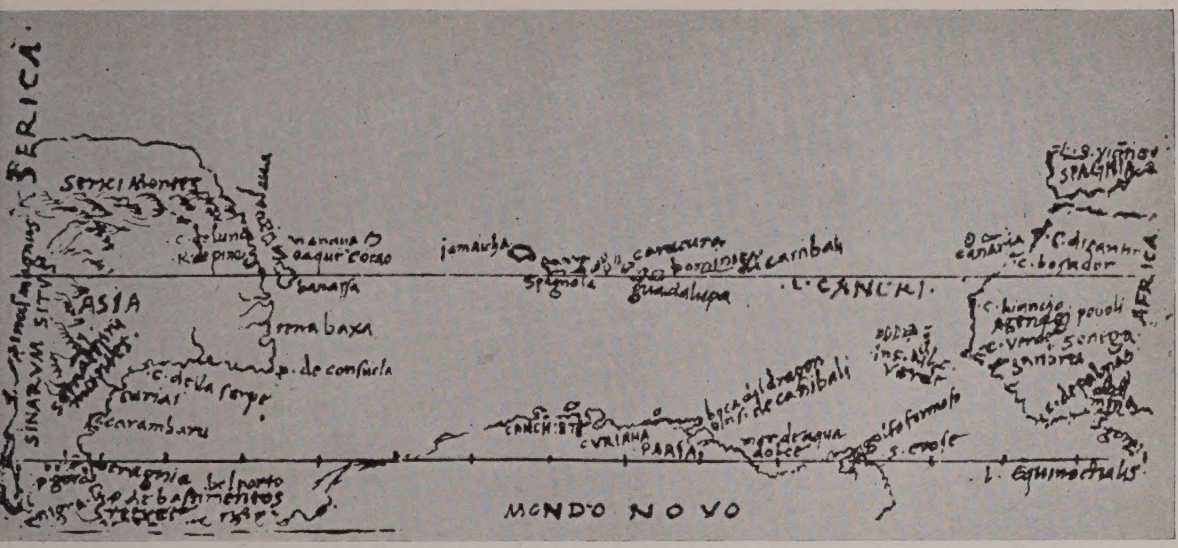
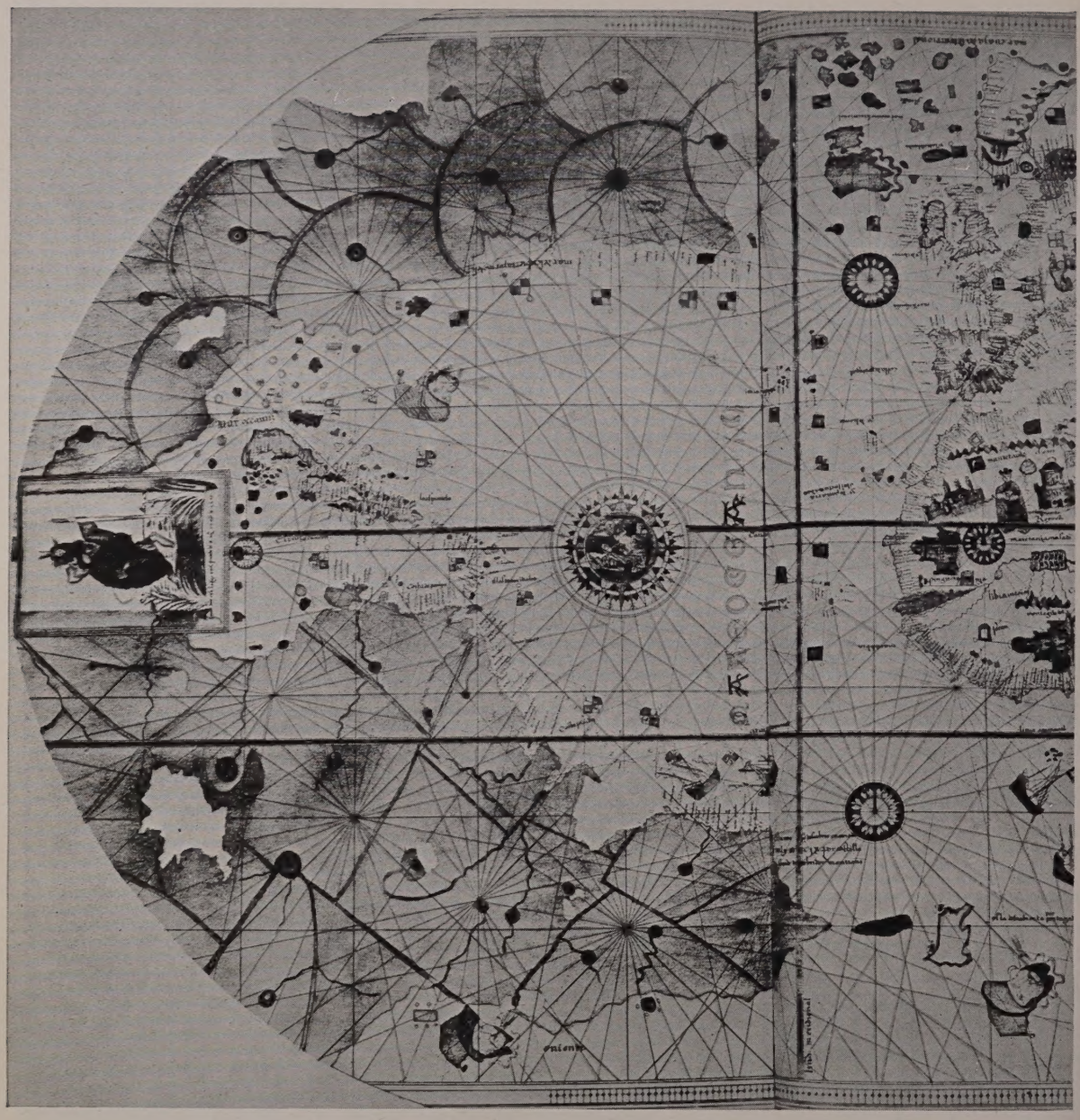


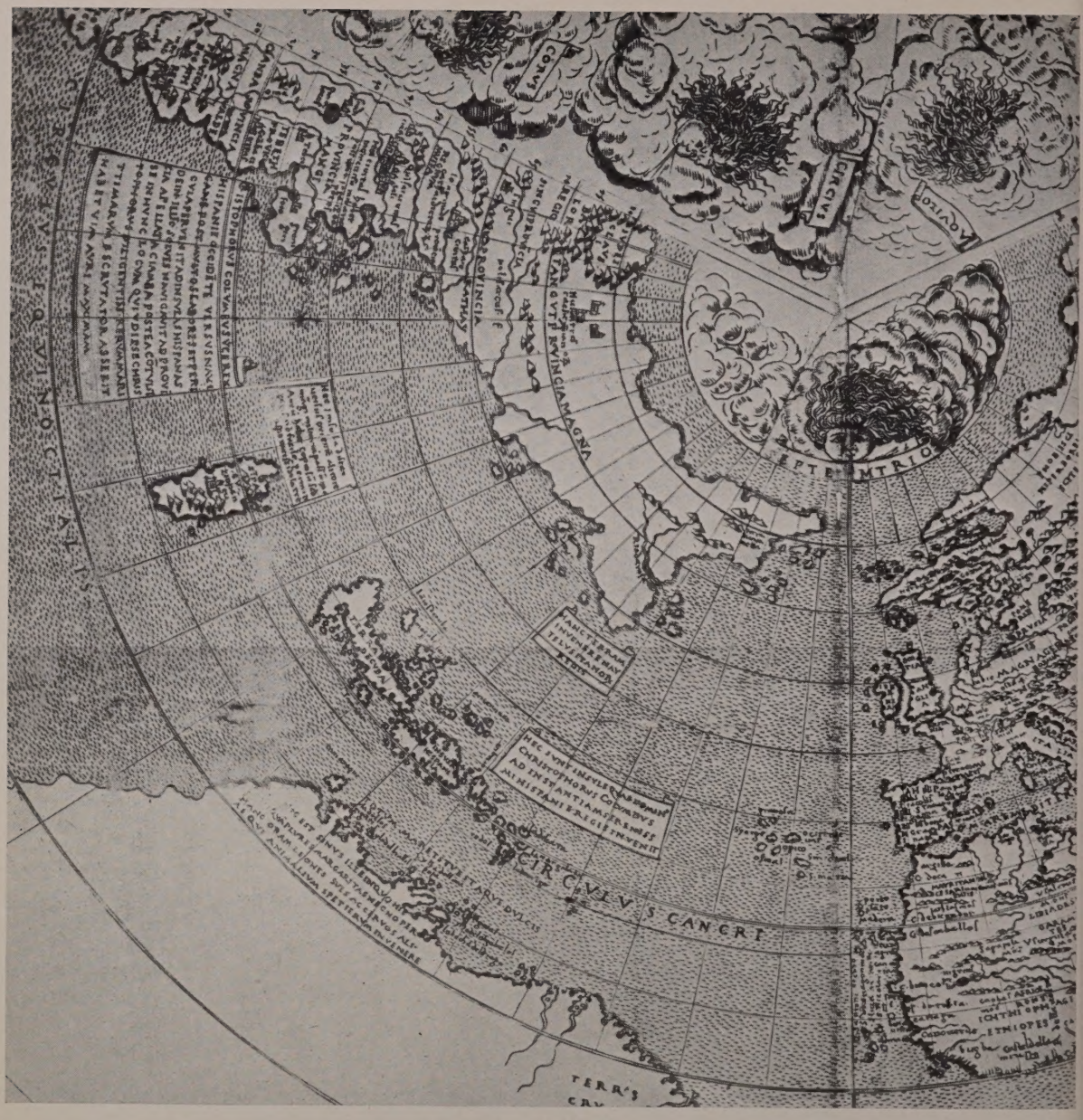
Fig. 3: above) *This sketch map, which s probably based in part on a map drawn y Columbus's brother, connects the dis-overies of his fourth voyage along the Central American coast with the parts of he West Indies and South America pre-iously known, and relates them to Ptol-my's geography of Asia. Cuba does not ppear. The South American coast, here alled "Mondo Novo", is drawn from its xploration by Columbus in 1498 and by ater voyagers. The mainland of Hondur-s, along which Columbus in 1502 sought passage into the Indian Ocean, is iden-ified with Asia. In the north lie the "Serici Montes" (Mountains of China); o the south it tapers to an isthmus washed n the west by the "Sinus Magnus" which Ptolemy laid down in south-east Asia.*

Fig. 4: right) *Columbus's ship, the* Santa Maria, *in the Bahamas, 1492. This illustration is one of the three woodcuts —the earliest printed representations of the New World—published in the first edition of his letter to the Treasurer of Aragon describing his discoveries. The islands here grouped conventionally were named by him; they include San Salvador (Watling Island), his first landfall, and at the top right "Hyspana" (Hispaniola)*



(Fig. 5) Western portion of the world-map; dated 1500, drawn by Juan de la Cosa, who sailed with Columbus in 1493–94 and made three later voyages to America. The Central and South American sections of the map are drawn on a larger scale, for emphasis. The coast of South America is laid down from Spanish discoveries to 1499 and Cabral's landfall in Brazil in 1500. Though la Cosa was one of those who in 1494 certified to Columbus that Cuba was a peninsula, it is here drawn as an island; since it was first circumnavigated in 1508, the chart may have been revised or completed then. Cabot's discoveries in North America bear English flags and the legends "Cavo [cape] de Ynglaterra" and "Mar descubierta por inglese"

(Fig. 6) The "Cantino" world-chart of 1502 is the earliest Portuguese map to show the New World. The places discovered by Columbus on the Cuban coast are marked on the land mass, top left, which represents a projection of Asia. The lands on the Portuguese side of the demarcation line (270 leagues west of the Cape Verde Islands) are more elaborately drawn than those on the Spanish side, and Brazil is decorated with drawings of the parrots reported by Cabral. The Corte Real discoveries in Greenland and Labrador are marked by Portuguese flags



(Fig. 7) Part of the world-map by G. M. Contarini, engraved in 1506 by F. Roselli; the earliest printed map to show any part of the New World. Columbus's claim to have reached "Ciamba" (Cochin China) and "Zimpangu" (Japan)—here laid down on the Tropic of Cancer—is stated in a legend placed off the China coast, although Cuba is drawn as an island. The South American discoveries appear as a portion of a great continent, and those in North America (attributed in another legend to the Portuguese) as a north-east promontory of Asia

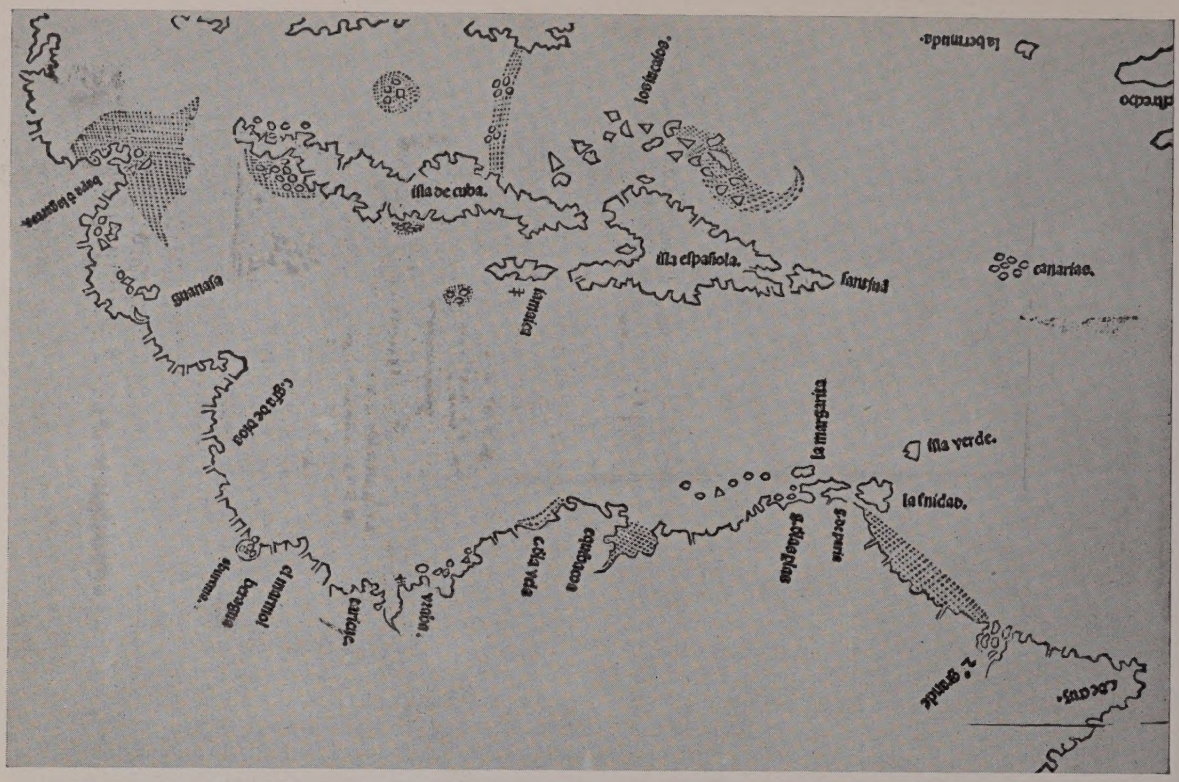
from classical geographers, adding 30° from Marco Polo, and adopting a shorter measure for the degree (45 nautical miles, against Ptolemy's 50 and the reality of 60), Columbus was able further to reduce Toscanelli's estimated distance by one-sixth. This placed Cipangu in the longitude of the western Antilles, and Cathay in that of the west coast of Mexico. In fact, when Columbus made his landfall at Watling Island in the Bahamas on October 12, 1492, he had passed the point at which he had expected to find Japan by 400 miles, under a week's sailing. On this voyage, to reassure the crew, "it was always feigned to them that the distances were less, so that the voyage might not appear so long. Thus two reckonings were kept . . . the shorter being feigned, and the longer being the true one."

Both Columbus's course, during his first Atlantic crossing of thirty-three days from the Canaries, and his identifications of the landfalls which he made in the course of his four voyages must be interpreted in the light of his purpose—the "Enterprise of the Indies". In Cuba, which he at first took for Cipangu but later found "to be so large . . . that I could not suppose it to be an island but the continental province of Cathay", he sent an embassy to seek out the Great Khan. In 1494, on his second voyage, he took sworn statements from his officers that Cuba was a peninsula—the south-east promontory of Asia, or "Golden Chersonese", of Ptolemy. The discovery of the South American coast on his third voyage (1498) led him to suppose that this was the seat of the Earthly Paradise and (for the first time) that he had found "a very great continent . . . until today unknown". God had made him (so he wrote in 1500) "the messenger of the new heaven and the new earth (*nuevo cielo y mundo*)" announced in the Apocalypse; "and He showed me the spot where to find it". On his last voyage (1502–4) Columbus coasted Central America, assumed to be the kingdom of "Cattigara" (Indochina), from Honduras to Darien in search of a navigable passage to the west, perhaps into Ptolemy's "Sinus Magnus" (Great Gulf); and he believed himself to be only nineteen days' journey from the Ganges.

Of the charts of his discoveries which Columbus drew, only one fragment in his hand is known (Fig. 2), although other representations may be derived from them (Figs. 4, 11). A contemporary sketch map (Fig. 3) based on information from Bartholomew Columbus (who like his brother Christopher had been a chartmaker) suggests how Columbus reconciled his discoveries with the Asiatic geography of Ptolemy and Marco Polo. The name "Mondo Novo" (New World) given in this map to the South American mainland reflects Columbus's belief that he had discovered a hitherto unknown land mass, of which he had written (as we have seen) in these very words.

This phrase had, as early as 1493, been used to describe the "Indies" of Ptolemy and Marco Polo revealed by Columbus's first voyage; but it did not then, nor much later, necessarily imply a new continent. By a historical irony however it was to rob Columbus of his laurels even before his death in 1506. A tract of 1503, entitled in its Latin editions *Mundus Novus*, contained a letter from the Florentine Amerigo Vespucci describing his voyage to South America in 1501–2 under the Portuguese flag. Here Vespucci claimed to have "found a continent" which (he asserted) "it is proper to call a new world"; and Martin Waldseemüller, reprinting the letter in 1507, saw "no reason why we should not call this other part . . . America after the sagacious discoverer Americus." Geographers were becoming conscious that to the three parts (or continents) of the mediaeval world-map a fourth—a New World—had been added. Waldseemüller's large world-map of 1507 is the earliest map to use the name of America, which he applied to the southern part of the continent.

Even in Columbus's own day neither the chroniclers of his voyages nor the Spanish and Portuguese mapmakers agreed in accepting his cosmographical interpretations. In 1494 Peter Martyr introduced the concept of a "Western Hemisphere", and in 1496 Columbus's friend Bernáldez told him that another 1200 leagues sailing westward would still not have brought him to Cathay. Contemporary maps (e.g. Figs. 5–11), ingeniously grafting the new discoveries on the old stock of Ptolemy and mediaeval lore, present widely divergent views on the relation between the new lands and the east coast of Asia. The world-map drawn in 1500 (but perhaps not completed until 1508) by Juan de la Cosa, Columbus's pilot (Fig. 5), shows a continuous continental coastline from north to south, interrupted only (at the neck of the vellum) by a picture of St Christopher covering the area in which Columbus sought a strait in 1502–3. Here, as in the Portuguese "Cantino" chart of about 1502 (Fig. 6), it is not clear whether the lands in the west were regarded as joined to Asia or divided from it; but the Portuguese were quicker than the Spaniards to appreciate that the westerly seaway to Cathay was closed by a continent. The map


isla de cuba.
isla española.
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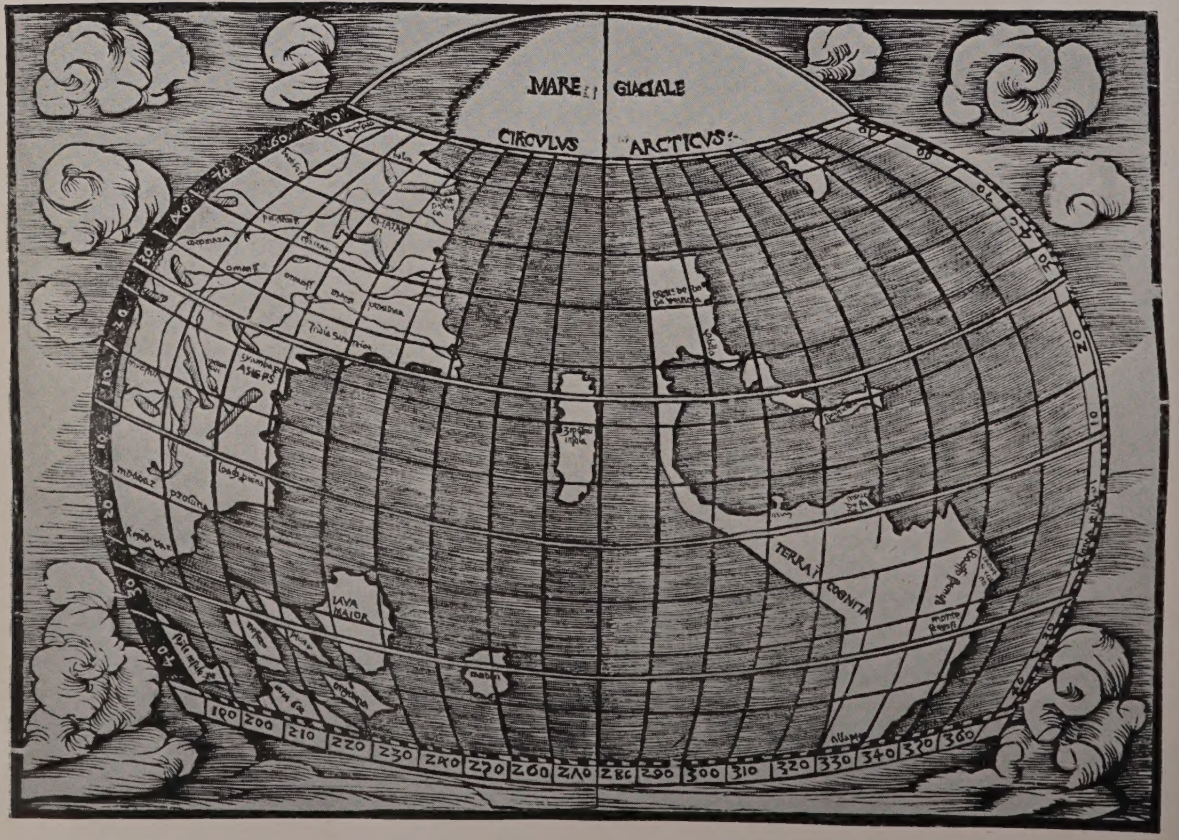
guanaja
c. gracias
c. de cruz.


MARE GLACIALE
CIRCVLVS ARCTICVS
TERRA INCOGNITA
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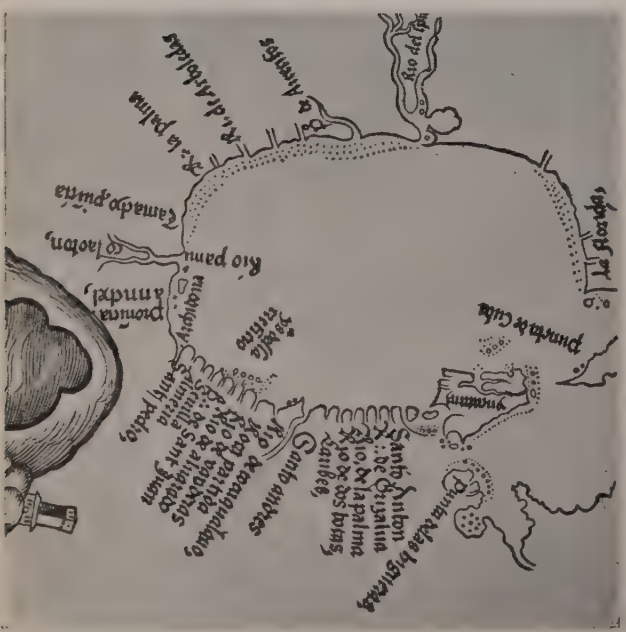
(*Fig. 8:* opposite, top) *The earliest printed Spanish map of any part of America, published in 1511 with Peter Martyr's first* Decade of the New World, *and showing Spanish discoveries. Cuba is an island; landfalls on Yucatan and Florida, otherwise unrecorded, are indicated; and Bermuda is marked for the first time.* (*Fig. 9:* opposite, bottom) *The Western Hemisphere by J. Stobnicza, 1512. Asia still has its Ptolemaic extension to the east, but there is no land connection with America, which is laid down as a continent.* (*Fig. 10:* above) *Part of a MS world-map, drawn about 1508, perhaps at Genoa.* (*East is at the top.*) *The South American coast has been extended from Vespucci's voyage to the Plate, and its Pacific coastline is probably a later insertion. The names "Antiglia" and "Septem civitates" associate the New World with legendary Atlantic islands*



(*Fig. 11:* above) *A map of the New World from the edition of Ptolemy printed at Strassburg in 1513, with "modern" maps drawn by Waldseemüller. This map was prepared from information derived from "the Admiral", who is presumed to be Columbus. The delineation of the West Indies, however, follows that of the Cantino chart (Fig. 6) except that it connects the coast in the north-west to South America, thus incorporating the results of Columbus's last voyage. The inscription, on South America, gives Columbus (not, as earlier, Vespucci) the credit for discovering America.* (*Fig. 12:* left) *Map of the Gulf of Mexico, printed in 1524 with the second letter of Hernan Cortes from Mexico (1520). Yucatan, discovered in 1517, was believed to be an island, as shown here. This is the earliest map to use the name Florida*

(*Fig. 13:* above) *The Western Hemisphere, from the globe of Johannes Schöner, 1515. The outline of America and its relation to Cipangu and Asia follow Stobnicza's map (Fig. 9) but Schöner makes two notable innovations. Straits into the Pacific are shown in 10° N and 45° S; the southern, no doubt a misrepresentation of the River Plate, divides America from a land mass which anticipates the "Southern Continent" of later cartographers; and it was perhaps from this globe that Magellan learnt that "he had to sail through a very well-concealed strait, having seen it in a chart in the King of Portugal's Treasury".* (*Fig. 14:* right) *This sketch, from the journal of Pigafetta who sailed in the* Victoria, *is of Magellan Strait ("Streto patagonico") which was first called after Magellan on maps some 15 years later*

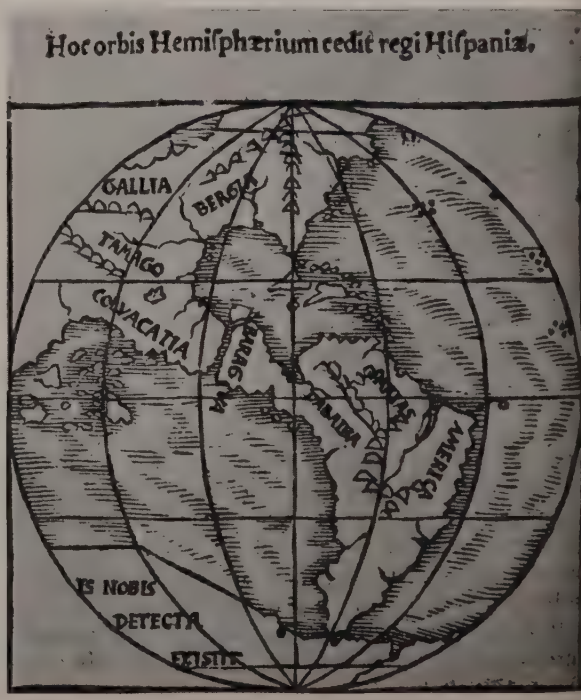
Mare glaciale
Terra
Canibali
Cannibali
Cannibali
Cann

—correct; but the Spice Islands are laid down 10° west of the Mexican coast: and on the North American mainland a later hand has inserted (in darker ink) Ptolemaic names: Ciamba, Thebet, etc.

of 1506 by G. M. Contarini (Fig. 7), the earliest printed map to show the new discoveries, is drawn on a projection which makes the relationship plain. A wide sea passage divides the North American discoveries of the English and Portuguese (here drawn as a promontory of Asia) from the Spanish discoveries in South America. Between Cipangu, 15° west of Cuba and in a lower latitude, and the coast of Cathay, 40° further west, is the legend: "Christopher Columbus . . . sailing westward reached the Spanish islands . . . weighing anchor thence he sailed to the province called Ciamba [Cochin China]. Afterwards he betook himself to this place [Cipangu] which . . . has great store of gold." In this map we may see an early guess at the existence of the Pacific Ocean, perhaps from rumours picked up by the Portuguese in the East. Peter Martyr's map of Central America of 1511 (Fig. 8), however, shows an unbroken shore from Yucatan to Cape Nassau; and in the Stobnicza hemispheric map of 1512 (Fig. 9), based on a map published by Waldseemüller in 1507, an uninterrupted coastline is drawn from 50° N to 40° S. By this time the division of the world into two hemispheres was firmly established.

Meanwhile English and Portuguese navigators had made landfalls in North America, and Spanish expeditions had revealed the coast of South America as far as the River Plate. In 1497 John Cabot, sailing from Bristol and like Columbus seeking Cathay by the west, had reached Newfoundland or Nova Scotia, which he took to be the continent of Asia. The English flags on Juan de la Cosa's map (Fig. 5) indicate the coasts discovered by Cabot on this voyage and perhaps on his second, in 1498, of which there is no written record. In 1500 and 1501 the Azorean Gaspar Corte Real made two voyages on which he rediscovered Greenland and coasted Labrador southward. These discoveries are drawn in the Cantino chart (Fig. 6) on the east, or Portuguese, side of the demarcation line between the Spanish and Portuguese spheres, determined by the Treaty of Tordesillas in 1494. Pedro Alvares Cabral, leading the second Portuguese fleet to India in 1500, sailed south-west from the Cape Verde Islands, perhaps to make use of the north-east trade winds and to avoid calms off the African coast, perhaps to discover lands in South America on the Portuguese side of the Tordesillas line. This course in fact took him to Brazil, where he landed in 17° S before resuming his voyage to the Cape of Good

(Fig. 16) The hemispheres by Franciscus Monachus, published in 1529, show both Magellan Strait and the Central American strait indicated by Schöner (Fig. 13); and North America is represented as part of Asia. The Southern Continent "not yet discovered" extends across the foot of the map



(*Fig. 17*) *Drawn by Agnese at Venice in 1536, this map shows the track of the* Victoria *through "El streto de ferdinādo de magallanes" to complete the first circumnavigation of the world, 1519–22. The Spanish trade route from Peru across the Isthmus of Panama to Europe is also marked*

Hope. In 1501–2 Vespucci, who had met Cabral near Cape Verde on his return from India (June 1501), continued the exploration of the South American coast, apparently reaching a latitude of 50° S. A manuscript world-chart of about 1508 (Fig. 10) presents an early interpretation of the American continent in the light of these discoveries.

In September 1513 Vasco Nuñez de Balboa, on a land expedition from Darien, climbed a peak "from the whiche he myght see the other sea soo longe looked for, and never seen before of any man commynge owte of owre worlde." He was the first European to set eyes on the Pacific, called by the Spaniards "Mar del Zur" (South Sea). By 1520 the Gulf of Mexico from Yucatan to Florida had been uncovered by Cortes and other Conquistadors, but no strait was found (Fig. 12); and it was becoming plain that, if Cathay was to be attained on a westerly voyage, the great land mass of America which barred the way must be outflanked either by the north or by the south.

The story of the search for a north-west passage has been told in an earlier article (August 1953). To the south, a navigable route into the Pacific had been rumoured to exist several years before Magellan passed through his Strait (October–November 1520); and this route had been conjecturally drawn on maps and globes (e.g. Fig. 13) before his circumnavigation. The earliest authentic representation of the Magellan Strait is to be found in the sketches by Antonio Pigafetta who sailed in one of Magellan's two ships, the *Victoria* (Fig. 14).

Magellan dispelled for ever the geographical illusions as to the length of the westerly voyage to Asia, upon which earlier projects had been built. Columbus, at the Isthmus, thought himself 19 days from the Ganges; but 98 days were required by Magellan for the passage from the Strait to the Ladrones. His great voyage secured for Spain access to the Pacific by sea (Fig. 17), but it solved the geographical problem of the South Pacific only. A land connection between North America and north-east Asia could still be believed in (Figs. 15, 16), and this question was to remain unanswered until the age of Behring and Cook in the 18th century.

The history of the name America on maps deserves a final note. After its introduction by Waldseemüller in 1507, he himself discarded it, probably because he came to ascribe the discovery of the New World to Columbus rather than Vespucci (Fig. 11); but other cartographers, following his lead, continued to apply it to South America (Figs. 13, 15, 16). The name was for the first time placed on both halves of the American continent by Mercator in his world-map of 1538.

Australian Landscape

by ALAN MOOREHEAD, O.B.E.

Widely known as a war correspondent, as a novelist, and as the biographer both of Montgomery and of the three traitor scientists, Mr Moorehead is less familiar in the guise of an Australian. Yet he was born and educated in Melbourne; and in Rum Jungle *has rediscovered his own country which he left in 1936. This article was written specially for us to celebrate the Queen's visit*

THERE is a certain quality of stillness in the Australian scene. It is one of the very earliest memories I have: of waking in the morning in the "sleep-out"—the corner of the veranda which had been enclosed with wire netting against the flies and the mosquitoes—and of being aware of this quietness in the atmosphere combined with a sensation of very bright light and of wide flat space. By sliding back one of the panels of the wire netting I could often reach out and get an apricot or an apple off the nearest tree. Then bundling back into bed with my back propped against the wooden wall, and the cat unwillingly stretching himself beside me, I would eat the fruit in a slow concentrated abstraction and wait for the day's events to begin.

Beyond the fruit trees there was the paddock and the path, with a little swerve in it here and there to avoid some tree-trunk or a hollow in the ground, leading down to the creek; and beyond that the clumps of gum trees and wattles (even now I can never get myself to refer to wattles as mimosas) that reached away into the flat distance.

There was never any feeling that this scene had been through some adventure in the night, and even the spring and the autumn went by without changing it very much. It was always quietly waiting there and it was as fixed and as true to its own colours as the oil painting over the chimney-piece or the illustrated catalogue that hung on a nail behind the kitchen door.

Because we felt young and vigorous ourselves, it never occurred to us that we were living in an old country. But it was incredibly old, one of the oldest land-masses on the earth's surface, and when I look back on it now from the bright green springs of England I am always surprised at the really ancient things with which we were surrounded: the long downward-drooping leaves of the gum trees, the bare tired earth, the lizards and the antediluvian animals. If there had been ruined cities in Australia, or if Greek statues had been dredged up from the floor of the sea, we would have felt old enough no doubt; but age was never associated with the dried-up watercourse and its bright red cliffs nor the interminable plains. They had always been there and they were apart from time. And in the same way as objects in the darkness seem not to exist until light falls upon them, we never conceded that any of these things had any validity until the arrival of our ancestors from England fifty or a hundred years before.

* * *

I was brought up in the south-east of the continent, the most thickly settled part, the part where for a century and a half Australians have been engaged in creating a civilization which is as near to the British and, latterly, the American image as they can make it. It has been an astonishing pro-

A. J. Thornton

ktachrome

Camera Press

Australia's early fortunes came off the backs of the merino sheep, first imported into England from Spain by Sir Joseph Banks for George III; and wool is still much her most valuable export

gress. One must remember of course that with the exception of a few such natural resources as the forests and the minerals in the ground, the country provided very little for the early settlers. Nearly everything—whether it was the architecture or the engineering, the animals (such as the merino sheep) or the crops —had to be imported, mostly from Britain. We grew up in a world which was one long unrelenting struggle to plant these things down in an alien landscape.

The aborigines and the native animals offered no problem at all: after a short bewildered defence most of them gave up heart and vanished into the interior. But the climate and the soil were different matters; they fought back, as it were, and visited terrible disasters on the intruders. One never quite knew when these disasters were going to happen, but there was a quality of awfulness about them, of blind implacable fate. For no good reason drought descended, and

Lang *Kodachrome*

(Above) *Floods follow the miracle of rain in a thirsty land: on an up-country road in New South Wales.*
(Below) *South-Eastern Australia has emerged from the pioneer stage. Here man and beast have come to amicable terms with an ancient, alien landscape: there are dairy farms as well-established as in Devon*

.S. *Ektachrome*

achrome

Camer

Tasmania's Derwent Valley, about the latitude of Marseilles in the northern hemisphere, has apple orchards that might be in Kent were the climate less sunny and the background tamer

D. B. Lang *Kodachrome*

In the immense empty spaces of the North-West, where cattle "stations" are measured by the million acres—as big as Somersetshire or Lancashire—the half-wild horses roam free for much of the year; and before the cattle are mustered have themselves to be rounded up

dachrome D. B. Lang

Driven at first into hostile retreat by the advance of the white settlers, the aborigines are now largely integrated with the life of these 'outback' stations, providing a much-needed labour force

in a stealthy manner, by simply withholding the accustomed clouds. On the sheep and cattle stations everything that had been green and prosperous turned to misery and death, until at last, perhaps six months or a year later, the miracle of the rain intervened; and after the rain floods, bush fires, plagues of locusts and other pests arrived, biblically and inexplicably, from nowhere.

Although we would never have dreamed of admitting anything so fanciful, we were in fact living in an age of miracles. One winter, I remember, pink snow fell like some weird confection of sugar icing on the Australian Alps, and although this was scientifically explained (a whirlwind had picked up red dust from one of the salt-pans in the central deserts) it was still a miracle.

I do not suggest that these things could not have occurred anywhere else, but the difference here was that we were an emigrant people living in a country where no other civilization except that of the most primitive aborigines had ever flourished before. Consequently we had no local myths or legends to interpret the supernatural for us. We called it luck, and everything was a new experience. When a man "struck it lucky" on the goldfields, or got lost in the bush, or won £1000 on that phenomenal racehorse Pharlap, it was something out of the void, an original stroke of destiny.

All this is now very much changed. Even within my own lifetime this south-eastern corner of Australia has emerged from the pioneer stage and has begun to find a place in the sedate society of nations, to enter, so to speak, into the queue of history. The myths and the legends have begun: there is the cricket myth, the Australian soldier myth, the crime myths, the myths of the bush: true myths of course (if there can be such things), but essentially part of the pattern of a settled community. My city of Melbourne is now a monster of over a million inhabitants, and Sydney is larger still. A new generation is growing up there that has very little need to know anything of the bush, miracular or otherwise. Theirs is the life of the steel-mill and the 8.15 up train to the city. In the surrounding countryside there are apple orchards and dairy farms that might belong to Kent or Devon, and Sydney bridge reaches across dockyards to the sort of garden suburbs

B. Lang Kodachrome

(Above) *Urban settlement in Australia is mainly near the coasts. From Rockhampton in Queensland, on the Tropic of Capricorn, the railway probes far inland but still reaches less than half-way to the centre of the continent.* (Below) *Australian industry is no longer an infant: witness the scale of the briquette factory at Yallourn, eighty miles east of Melbourne, processing brown-coal from vast local deposits*

P.S. Ektachrome

chrome

Camera

Sydney's 1,500,000 inhabitants are nearer in spirit to British or American city folk than to their own pioneer ancestors; joint-stock companies, banks and insurance houses have substituted the stability of calculation for what was until recently a glorious gamble

D. B. Lang Kodachrome

Perth in Western Australia, more than 1500 miles by rail from the nearest State capital, Adelaide, basks on the Swan River in a climate and amid vegetation of Mediterranean or Californian quality

that you might see in Philadelphia or San Francisco.

Even drought has to some extent been brought under control by railroads and water conservation, and such natural hazards as floods and bush fires do not strike into the heart of the community as they did before. Devices such as artificial insemination are removing the risks of breeding, and one after another joint-stock companies which are able to weather financial crises are taking over the big station properties from private owners. In the same way mining has been transformed from a one-man gamble into a solid business of machinery and stocks and shares. It is not now the weather, but world prices, which are the imponderables.

In other words, the supernatural age is almost finished, and it is no accident that in every town of any size in Victoria and New South Wales the architecture is dominated by the banks and the insurance company buildings. They rise up from the streets with their splendid marble façades, and they are much more imposing than the little one-storey shops scattered about below; they are a re-assurance that the age of security has begun.

It was not until recently—within the last year or two, in fact—that I began to discover the other three-quarters of Australia, that vast region, almost as large as the United States, which is covered by the States of West and South Australia, the Northern Territory and Queensland. Its total population is 2,500,000, which is rather less than the combined populations of Sydney and Melbourne. This is the American West as it might have been a century or two ago. In those immense spaces the element of stillness survives, and the age of miracles is perhaps not finished yet. No-one can say what the effect will be of the recent discovery of oil near Exmouth Gulf in the west, of uranium at Rum Jungle and Radium Hill, and of other minerals in the north, and even the infant rocket range at Woomera seems to presage an unpredictable bound into the future.

Most people who go to Australia (like many Australians themselves) are barely aware of this part of the continent. Coming by air from Europe they touch it for an instant when they descend for a night stop at Darwin, which is a very minor Singapore on the edge of the Timor Sea. Then, flying on to Sydney next

day, the brown earth streams by below as monotonous as the sea. Coming by ship from England, they glimpse only the green fertile fringe at Perth and Adelaide, both charming places: Perth on the banks of a wide river, black swans and yachts on the water and low hills beyond, and Adelaide ringed by vineyards with Mount Lofty up above. But they are the ports on an ocean of land where you can drive for days on end (carrying extra petrol tanks and water) and see nothing but the empty plain endlessly repeated: in the words of the Australian poet, "the vision splendid of the sunlit plains extended, and at night the glory of the everlasting stars." Your glimpses of civilization will be a lonely homestead: a corrugated-iron roof, weatherboard walls, a water tank on steel stilts, a few straggling trees, a heap of firewood in the desert, and in the bare paddock (which might be half a mile square) the horses of the boundary riders.

The men are silent and physically lean. They wear a less dramatic version of the broad-brimmed hats, the coloured shirts and the tight trousers of the American West, and their vision of earthly bliss is a brief and glorious blow-out at some threadbare bush pub that might be two hundred miles away. The rest of their lives is cattle. Just occasionally you will come on towns like Kalgoorlie (which was made by gold), Whyalla (iron), or Alice Springs (the railhead in the centre of the continent). But these are oases in the wilderness. Once it was the fashion to call this region the "Dead Heart of Australia", and there are, of course, fearful deserts. But on a recent journey across the country from south to north there was never a time, I think, when I was beyond the sight of trees and grass for more than a few hours, and this was in a drought year. For hundreds of miles beyond Adelaide there were farms and grazing lands, and Alice Springs will perhaps become another Las Vegas one day. The Darwin–Rum Jungle area is semi-tropical forest.

Coming south again from Darwin I followed a route that lay roughly along the 20th parallel, just south of the Gulf of Carpentaria, and it took me through the great cattle stations that cover areas of thousands of square miles. This is the region of kangaroos and wild horses, of mirages and of bright birds that fly screaming in flocks towards the bores—the windmills that pump water up to the surface from the vast subterranean lake that lies below.

On the Queensland coast you emerge into another world, profuse, tropical and as splendid as any travel poster of the Indies. For two thousand miles the coastline, studded with beaches and river estuaries, runs on below the Tropic of Capricorn to ten degrees south of the Equator, and the climate is not unlike that of the American South. For a thousand miles of the way the Great Barrier Reef, the largest wall of coral in existence, follows the shore, and as you fly northward there is hardly a moment when there is not some tropical island, heavily wooded, surrounded by coral and probably uninhabited, poised on the warm sea below. A short distance inland the Great Dividing Range rises up to about 1500 feet, and in the coastal strip between these two, between the hills and the coral islands, there grow, or could be made to grow and in abundance, such disparate things as wheat and cotton, timber and cattle, sugar cane and pineapples, tobacco and bananas. Queensland rum is a very fine drink.

The sea offshore has never been regularly fished, and I can remember on a single day on the Reef seeing at least fifty different varieties, from whales and sharks to a tiny darting fish striped like a football jersey and named, pleasantly, a Bullseye.

Nearly everywhere else in Australia the overmastering problem is water. Here in North Queensland the rain falls by the hundred inches, and a great deal of it courses down the short coastal rivers and runs away to waste in the Pacific. There is a project for reversing the course of these rivers so that they will irrigate the dry areas in the interior, and it is not so visionary as it sounds; already something of the sort is being done in the south, where many millions of pounds are being spent in changing the direction of the Snowy River.

I find it impossible to believe that these areas are not bound upon a very bright future. So much could happen so quickly, just as it has done in the South-East; perhaps some mass movement of population such as the drift to the American West. It will mean, of course, that the native life of Australia will be turned out of its last brief refuge, and perhaps destroyed entirely. Almost the saddest thing I saw on this last journey to Australia was a large roan kangaroo grazing beside a rocket-launching platform at Woomera. Nothing was happening that day, and he munched at leisure, just lifting his head occasionally to gaze casually across at me with a moist and gentle eye. I don't know what happened to him when the next hideous flash filled the sky, but alas, I suppose he is expendable, and the quality of stillness I remember as a child is not a very enduring thing. This is the price—or, if you like, the tragedy—of progress.

Igan Alade Helps Itself

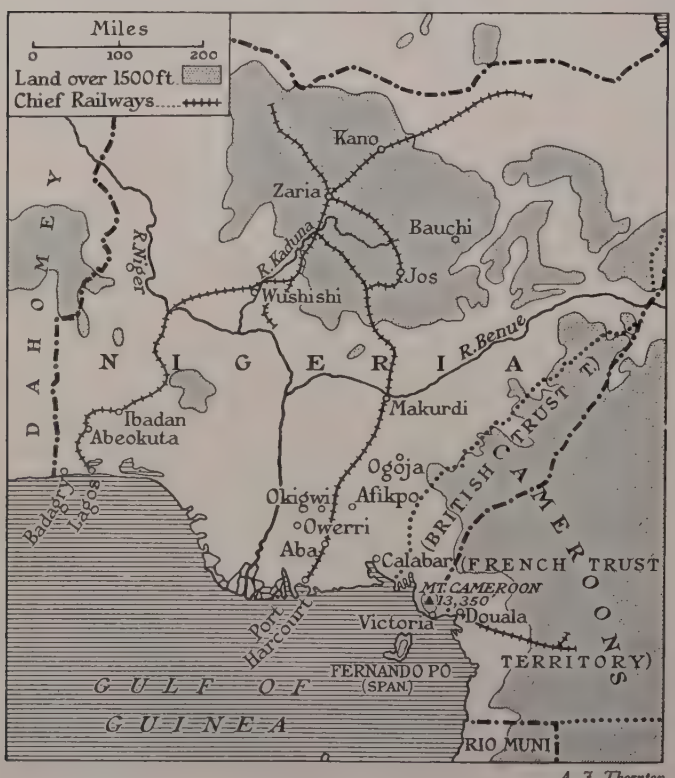
by IAN BRINKWORTH

One of the things most to be desired in any development project is to get the people themselves to make a contribution to their own advancement. There have been many attempts at finding a way to do this in Nigeria but, until the introduction of the Community Development Scheme, few of them had much success in touching off the people's enthusiasm.

The Ten-Year Plan for Colonial Development and Welfare, which was first issued by the United Kingdom Government in 1946, made provision for grants of assistance towards approved schemes of town planning and village reconstruction. This scheme was amended in 1948, as far as Nigeria was concerned, and money was voted by the Nigerian Government for village reconstruction. This has now come to be known as Community Development.

The purpose of the amendment was to enable Residents and District Officers to have at their disposal funds which they could use to encourage local development and enterprise. The aim of this imaginative legislation was to encourage the people to associate themselves with development schemes, and every effort was made to help them to plan schemes of their own.

The small town of Igan Alade in the Abeokuta Province of the Western Region of Nigeria was one of the places which took advantage of the Community Development Scheme. The people of Igan Alade decided that what they most wanted was a playing field and a Community Centre, and that the centre should consist of a pavilion and a courtyard for dancing, with, at one side of it, a raised wall which would serve as a projection screen for the Public Relations Department's travelling cinema vans. The centre was also, they decided, to have a football field and to include changing rooms for teams and a postal agency.



A. J. Thornton

The District Officer was consulted and, after discussing things with the townspeople, and when everyone had had their say, work began under the expert direction of the Assistant District Officer who advised on technicalities; on what labour would be required and for how long; on the quantities of materials needed; building plans for the centre and other administrative details. The organization of the labour and the division of the work was a matter left entirely to the townspeople. Labour is always one of the greatest difficulties in any rural area but in these Community Development Schemes, when the people's enthusiasm is aroused, it is no problem at all.

In these schemes the people pay two-thirds of the cost of projects and the Government contributes the other third. The value of the people's

All photographs by the author

An essential preliminary to any Community Development work is a general airing of views. Here the Assistant District Officer consults the people of Igan Alade, a small town in the Yoruba country near Abeokuta, about their needs. They decide to build a Community Centre and a playing field

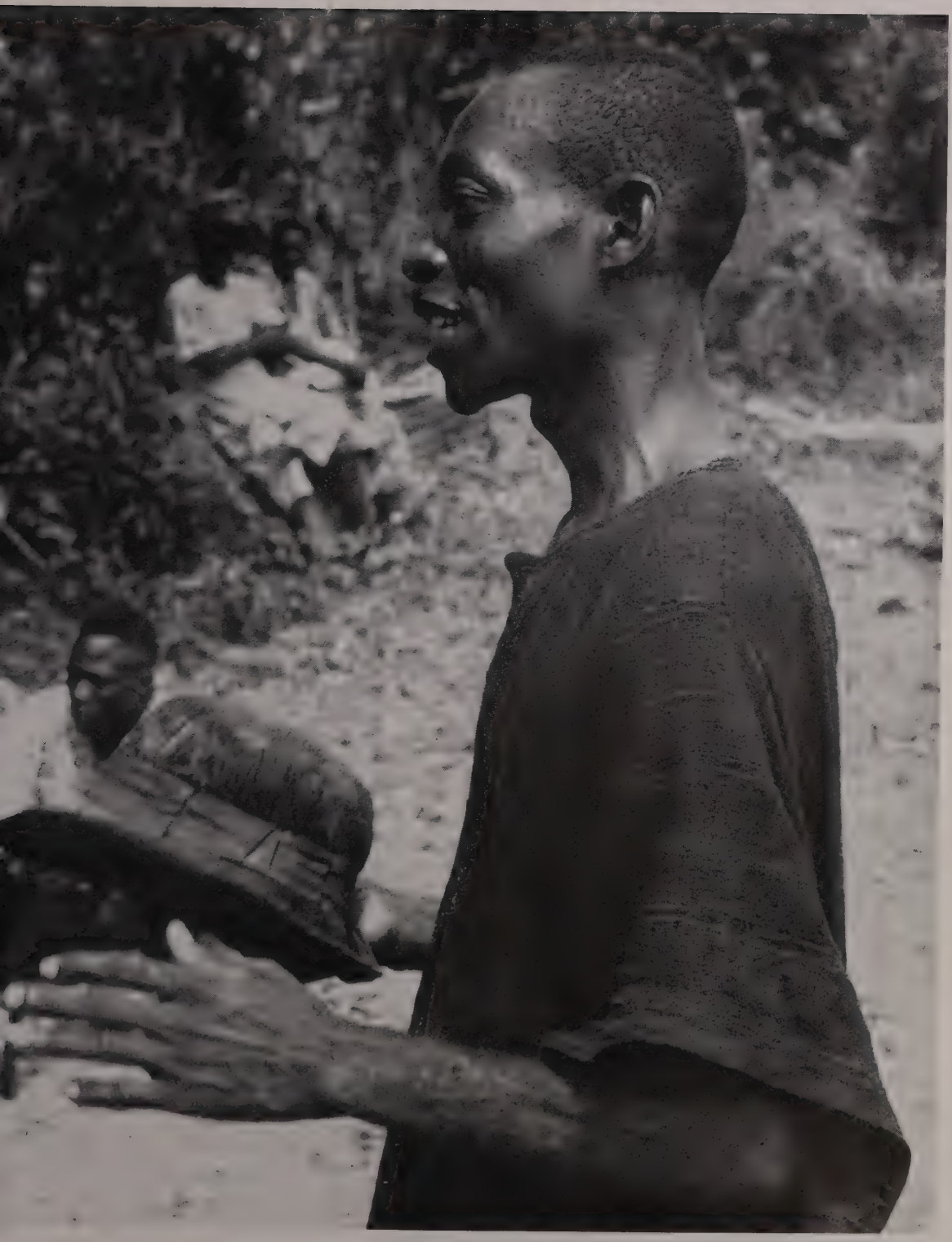
labour is assessed and this is allowed to count as part of their two-thirds contribution. It is an admirable arrangement and both Government and people are well served. It is a magnificent sight to see a whole community turn out: men, women and children who really put their backs into the work and who get great enjoyment out of this traditional fashion of getting things done. Even the smallest children take part and strut with tremendous importance to their work, carrying on their heads some tiny receptacle filled with earth or water for the building. It all helps!

The social importance of schemes such as that of Igan Alade goes, however, a good deal beyond the provision of a few amenities for a village previously almost totally without them, for it is such schemes as these which will help to slow down the drift of the young people to the urban centres, where they swell the consumers who have to be fed by an ever-dwindling number of producers. But the people of Igan Alade are not concerned with these larger issues. It is enough for them that they have improved their town by their own efforts and that they are now busy enjoying what they have created. The centre is always full of children playing ping-pong or old gentlemen smoking their pipes and watching others play a traditional chess-like game. In particular Igan Alade is savouring the luxury of having its own postal agency where a man can post and collect his mail—that indeed is something!

Igan Alade is only one of the successful results of the Community Development Scheme. There are many others: maternity centres, bridges, market stalls, schools, mass literacy campaigns have all been financed in this way.

Nigeria has found an admirable way of identifying her people with their own development.

(Above) *The concentrated attention with which all present follow the discussions clearly indicates the importance that the members of the community attach to the proposed scheme.* (Left) *The Yoruba people devote much care to their dress. This type of headgear is greatly favoured amongst the local farmers*



The Aro (second senior chief) of Igan Alade, in his working clothes, lends his important support to the plan for building a Community Centre, including changing rooms, a postal agency and a courtyard for dancing and general recreation

(Above) *The Assistant District Officer talks the scheme over with his District Officer, and reports on the conclusions reached at the meeting.* (Below) *When the building plans have been completed the Assistant District Officer goes to Igan Alade and explains to the foreman precisely what is to be done*

(Right) *Before the big trees can be felled and any building begin, the tangled bush has to be cleared. The machete, the most universal working implement in West Africa, is the only tool which can deal with the tangle.* (Below) *There is very little work done in West Africa without music of some kind—certainly no heavy work. Drums are the instruments* par excellence *for back-breaking labour of this sort. A huge tree that needed to be removed is cut up by hand with axes of local design into sections which are then hauled and pushed away*

(Above) *The women's principal duty is to carry sand and water to the site. Here they are forming a dump of sand ready to begin building.* (Below) *The men's working dress is more functional than the women's though on social occasions they concede nothing to them in sartorial gaiety*

(Above) *The finished Community Centre. On the left stands the wall specially constructed to act as a screen for film shows given by travelling cinema vans of the Public Relations Department.*
(Below) *Football is very popular in West Africa. The opening game was played with enormous zest*

(Above) *The two men most responsible for bringing the scheme to a successful conclusion stand in the middle of their rejoicing people. They are the Seriki, the senior chief (on the left), and the Aro of Igan Alade, this time in festive clothes.* (Below) *Drums are used to accompany hard work but they are always present when there is any celebration on. Everybody wears their holiday clothes*

(Above) *The opening of the Community Centre was an event of some importance, and the ownspeople were anxious to make full use of all their new facilities. Here the dance floor is being tried out.* (Below) *The children soon caught the general spirit of celebration and used the courtyard to full advantage—even though some of their dancing was not altogether as organized as that of their elders*

My Worst Journey—III

by TOM HARRISSON, D.S.O.

This is the third article of a series in which some of our more distinguished contributors place their memorably abhorrent journeys in scales of badness which they have chosen for themselves. Mr Harrisson, who is Government Ethnologist and Curator of the Sarawak Museum, Kuching, has practised his recreation of "living among strange people" on Malekula in the New Hebrides, and was parachuted into Borneo to organize guerrillas against the Japanese. He described the Kelabits, who prevented this worst journey from being his last, in an article that we published in May 1951

A JOURNEY involves more than physical travel, we know. You can go from Paris to London asleep. Equally, in your sleep you can visit the moon. The quality of the journey—good, better or worst—depends on mood as much as movement. For mixture of mood and muscle I most remember Bario, at 3700 feet the highest community in Borneo.

I first dropped in on Bario from a bomber nearly ten years ago; have since many times travelled there over the ranges from north, east or west—anything from ten to thirty days, according to route, rains and urgencies.

Travelling fast (say five linear miles a day) in the jungle, the gibbons sing as they swing in the distance. Monkeys, deer, pheasants, parrots, barbets and bulbuls hear you and fade away ahead. Mostly you cannot see beyond a hundred feet forward and two hundred up; always dull green. Moving, you must watch your feet—and the leeches. Some of the gorges and passes are very beautiful. But sweat in your face and days more of walking on your mind are no aids to aesthetic enjoyment.

These journeys, means to ends, have become telescoped in my mind into one interesting but overlong grind. Incidents stand out—like the time we got lost and did a day circle; capsizing a canoe and nearly losing two years' field-notes in a rapid; coming upon a frightened honey-bear face to face on a narrow track—but I cannot remember which year where.

But there *is* one Bario journey I do remember as a whole.

* * * * *

Early in December 1952 I went up there by way of the Trusan valley, south from Brunei Bay. My companions were the mahogany-skinned, long-haired Kelabits who took me from village to village; old friends. I had minimal luggage (notebooks, pencils, safety-pins). I intended to spend a few weeks checking social and economic changes of the past year in that remote pocket of nowhere. I could live on the country.

For the New Year the hundred or so people in the Bario long-house—a single wood-and-thatch building raised on poles, everyone living together without separate rooms—got together to throw a party. Hundreds of guests to eat buffalo, hump-backed cattle and venison, pork, partridge, chickens and eels; and to drink porridgy potent rice-wine called *borak*, ladled in gourds out of handsome dragon jars three feet high.

At these parties some job of work is done by the guests to help the hosts. It may be to clear an irrigation ditch or carry up from the river-bed a large stone slab to be put up as an ancestral memorial. This time it was to make an airstrip. They wanted this badly; and it is no use trying to hold the clock back for progressive-minded mountain people. They are determined not to be left out and pushed down by the new world closing in around them. In any case, utopias of isolation are about to be exterminated, alas.

Before the party was over I began to feel more queer than even all that food and drink, song and dance, arguing, running races and levelling ground, ought to make one. After it, I had arranged to do a round of neighbouring villages, before leaving for the coast. Kelabits feel strongly about promises and about hospitality. By the time I reached the second village I was ill. Fever alternated with freezing cold in the midday heat.

A lively party had been set for me that evening. Somehow I sat it through, leaning against a pillar by a blazing wood fire. Next day the kind villagers laid me in the bottom of a rough dug-out, pulled me along jungle brooks and across swamp some of the way back. The sun blazed into the boat. Then to walk the last four miles through the afternoon downpour—and mud, mud, mud.

I got to Bario half dead. But it was best to

be ill among those who knew my tastes and moods as well as I theirs. Step one of the journey.

* * * * *

Now I grew bad. Four days were delirious. I gave absurd orders—often in English, which of course no-one understood—that my Kelabit friends tried hard to interpret; e.g. "Bring me the fire here". With the fever came pneumonia in one lung and aching arthritis. They heated stones and put them against the pain. My forehead was rubbed with lemons. With knives they bled me by delicate gashes across my stomach. With a knife I cut nicks on a beam beside my mat as a tally, when I could no longer write.

Kelabits believe that the sick die of two lacks: physically, lack of food; psychologically, of will to live. I was given no chance to suffer either of these deficiencies. I could not keep down solids. The Kelabits don't milk their fat cows. Instead, I was fed *bubor*, a tasteless soupy brew made from the water of parboiled rice; the stock-pot refuse of rice pudding that didn't. Day and night this dreary stuff was poured into a mouth too slack to resist.

On the psychological side I got the full treatment, which consists of people leaning over you crooning in your ear, or—if you are in a very bad way—shouting straight into your mouth:

"Don't die, Tom. Do NOT die."

With additional supporting cries to taste.

On top of this came deputations from all about, to pay their respects to the so-sick white man. They brought pots or bamboos full of their own particular brew of bubor; these duly presented, they close around the prostrate form and vociferously deny it death. To one brought up to believe that the sick need above all peace and regularity, the first big illness of my life was not going according to the book. But they didn't let me die; perhaps it's as well Kelabits cannot read!

This went on, of course, in the daily atmosphere of long-house life, where dogs run over you, cocks crow under the floor and a man may play a mandolin before dawn; where there is no word for Privacy, and Quiet is a synonym for sadness.

This dual treatment worked. I sank to skin and bones. But delirium passed; fevers receded; only the bone-aches stayed on. So I completed step two of my journey, without moving a foot.

* * * * *

By great good luck, as I was recovering and starting to walk again, two geologists were reported in the area. Luck, because none had been in the uplands for many years and very few outsiders ever came into the solitude. They kindly hurried to bring me a new drug called Chloromycetin, which helped me enormously. But they insisted that even if I felt I could walk out presently, I would strain my heart doing so. Instead, they sent runners to the nearest radio set, way down in the lowlands, asking for the oil company's Auster to come in and pick me up.

These geologists considered the strip serviceable from their experience; and the Kelabits could (and did) polish it, as nothing could be expected for a fortnight or more. Duly an Auster did come, tiny and true, flittering between peaks and great banks of cloud. Amidst much excitement, the plane landed neatly, piloted by an old friend, Captain Jeffares. Jeff inspected the 500-yard runway, decided that (despite heavy rain) it was O.K. for the take-off.

I sat with knees doubled up, back to the wind-screen (without a safety-belt) to keep the weight forward. I thought we were airborne at full speed when three tremendous thumping leaps, plus one almighty bump, ended me up with a somersault which Bertram Mills could have applauded. And there was Jeff hanging head down from his safety-belt above me, cheek to opposite cheek. He had followed the plane's parabola; I as usual had made my own way. The engine was still running. I managed to help him down. Switch off. Get out of it!

The plane lay flat on its back in a buffalo wallow. It had *just* cleared the river bed at the end of the strip, hit the other bank to bound over a hundred yards in a style which the spectators later described as "like a buffalo running amok". The Kelabits rushed to help us. They were as amazed as we to find us alive. From the strip survival had looked and sounded impossible. They quickly turned the plane right way up, dragged it with ropes of vine, over logs, through the bog back onto their strip. So ended the third step of this journey, moving a few feet up (and down).

* * * * *

The Auster should have reached the oilfields airstrip at Seria on the coast in little more than an hour. There an ambulance waited to take me to Shell's fine hospital. When the plane did not return, a big amphibian came to look-see. The Auster, now on dry land, would need repairs beyond the

pilot's means. Laboriously we wrote out this news with slats of bamboo across the strip—the amphibian circling for half an hour overhead. Well, nothing else for it. We were going to have to walk out after all.

The first day out from Bario is the worst, on the eastern way. The track winds through rough jungle, constantly crossing rocky streams; then slap up to 6000 feet, the vegetation growing more stunted as you climb into cloud-land, until it is a pigmy forest of rhododendrons and heaths, pitcher plants and orchids, all overgrown with dripping cushions and tussocks of moss. This moss is ghastly stuff to get through, soaking, slimy, the tussocks hiding potholes into which the unwary can easily fall out of sight. Over the top and down out of the moss again into high jungle, once more crossing and recrossing what is now a surging river, frequently needing improvised tree-trunk bridges. On under the cliffs where hordes of bee-swarms blacken the glittering rock faces. Down along the narrow trail following the many ins and outs of the deepening valley, with two long-houses beautifully set in lawns far below. These are the only permanent dwellings between the rich uplands inhabited by Kelabits and the big navigable rivers of the lowlands on which live the Kenyah, Kayan and other peoples. Leaving these villages the trail climbs another set of ranges, threading through a tangle of mountains for two long days. Here, as before, the travellers sleep in improvised leaf shelters, put up in a few minutes wherever energy peters out.

Five days of such walking from Bario achieve at last a navigable river, although still in uninhabited country. Here were three forty-foot canoes, made from single hollowed-out tree-trunks of hundred-year-old trees; these to be paddled, poled, pulled, dragged with ropes over the rocks of the biggest rapids for half a day. Then afoot again over the watershed and down to the first long-house of the lowlands, on the Akar river, a tributary of the still larger Baram. A day's canoeing down the Akar until it forces through an impassable rock gorge. Porter round this, collect new boats below—the third lot in three days—and so on to the first outside contact, a mission station with radio. Three days' more boating, the water increasingly easy and deep, to the first Government post near the coast, Marudi.

Ordinarily this journey does not seem noteworthy. This time, every foot of climbing, every pace on slippery downhills, each waist-deep fording through fast water, all the splash and shout shooting a score of rapids, added up into little unkind pinches on the skull. Each slithery rock or trippable tree-root, routine hundreds of leech and mosquito bites, built into a leaning tower of tiredness.

Once more, half-a-dozen sturdy Kelabits kept me going with their strong-arm style of shock therapy. These people have no beasts of burden. But they would gladly have carried me if I had wished and regardless of difficulties. To have allowed this would have hurt all our manhoods. Sure enough by the end they had jollied me along until I was travelling out in front, in a kind of personal vacuum of unawareness. And Jeff was grand. He put flying firmly behind him and just walked. Few can ever have been so introduced unexpectedly bang into the centre of Borneo life without a word of its language or experience, yet so quickly grasping native courtesies and humours, thus delighting its pleasant people.

Nearly four months after leaving motor-cars and telephones, I got back among them—for once, with some pleasure. I was rather surprised to find myself practically dead. The press had inevitably magnified a misadventure. But it was slightly nice to know that so many people remembered that I even existed in far-away Borneo. So ended the fourth step of this journey, many feet and arms slogging. It left me with no wish ever to travel the interior again.

* * * * *

There was a delayed fifth step, however. This led by Comet to a bed in the Hospital for Tropical Diseases, London. At first it had been thought that I must have had typhoid. Now more detailed examination indicated that I had probably had Scrub Typhus. This is a deadly disease, largely found in grasslands and open country but not previously known from inside Borneo. It is carried by a microscopic mite called *Thrombicola*. This mite lives on mice most of the time, but is occasionally shed by them on the grass, whence it attaches itself to human beings. My geologist nurses turned out to have been physiologists, too; the walk *had* affected my heart. Quite a row of medical chores had to be hoed before a steep slope once more looked to me like a challenge. By the time this is in print I hope to be back in Borneo. And with luck at Bario . . .

Man O' War Bay

by ALEC G. DICKSON, M.B.E.

The author is Principal of the Man O' War Bay Training Centre near Victoria in the Cameroons

THE Fulani nomads of Northern Nigeria have a ceremony, *Sharo*, in which the young men of courting age compete in offering themselves to be publicly flogged. Clad only in a leather apron, the youth holds a mirror to his eyes, whilst his assailant, circling behind him with a stick in a kind of shuffling dance, with taunts and feints, rains blows upon his back. Not a whimper or a wince must be manifest in this testimony of manhood. Even amongst the Fulani cowherds now the custom is dying: elsewhere in Nigeria it is unknown.

Something of this idea—not in the crude test of physical hardiness so much as in the notion implicit in the mirror held before the eyes—came to mind three years ago when a project was started to provide an experimental training in citizenship for young Nigerians.

Development is the keynote today in dependent territories, development in local government and in constitutional structure no less than development in economic schemes. Everything would seem to be provided for—by ordinance or by act, by corporation or committee, by marketing board or technical college—everything, save perhaps the vital element of a will to make the machinery work, a heart to inspire the system. "For that we have no medicine," as a Hausa Christian friend remarked.

In this atmosphere any endeavour in West Africa today to mould a new élite contends with formidable difficulties. Some of these difficulties are not of our making : a tropical climate that saps mental no less than physical energy—and a tradition that inclines to regard privilege as the right to demand service rather than to give it. But for other problems we cannot so easily evade responsibility. "We are in pain to make them scholars—but not men," William Penn wrote some 300 years ago. Surveying the firm belief in the Certificate and Diploma as indispensable talismans in the surge of African youth towards the towns, and the fierce struggle for the Overseas Scholarship, one might sometimes despair. Yet when we hand over the reins of power we shall inevitably reap what we have sown. It will be little use, then, to assert that Africans in positions of privilege should display qualities and be actuated by motives such as we expect (but do not always find) in our own leaders. In colonial territories it is permissible to invert the familiar phrase and say that governments tend to get the people they deserve.

Our aim was to devise a training that might inspire the best of the younger educated Nigerians with a feeling of being on active service for their community, with a sense of common citizenship. Behind the effort lay the conviction that—as with the Civilian Conservation Corps in America, with the Sea and Mountain Schools of the Outward Bound Trust in Britain, with the Voluntary Work Camps of *Service Civil International*—this could only be achieved by bringing together young men in experiences that challenged their manhood and by confronting them with constructive tasks that stirred their imagination. With so little time and such limited resources, with official scepticism so inbred and popular attention so riveted on the political scene, all that could be aspired to was to touch here and there a chord amongst the best of the young adult Africans, in the hope that these might prove to be a new élite, the leaven to leaven the lump : or, as my clerk interpreted the words, the leaver to leaver the pump.

They came to us from all parts of Nigeria and the Cameroons—teachers, clerks, miners and telegraph linesmen, dispensers and male nurses, Cooperative Inspectors and Forestry Assistants, plantation overseers and young headmasters, members of Native Councils, District Heads and even Members of the Regional Houses of Assembly. Some were sent by Government Departments, some by Missions, some by Companies : all that they had in common was that they were young, they could speak English, and that their sponsoring authority claimed to see in each of them some potentiality of leadership, some stirring of a sense of responsibility—which it was our task to test, to sharpen or develop.

On the evening of their arrival they would tumble out of the lorries that had brought them the last 400 miles of their journey across the forests and mountains and rivers of some of the most difficult country in Africa, to our camp on the sea's edge at Man O' War Bay

in the Cameroons. Some had travelled the distance of London to Rome, to come on these short, intensive courses. In the lamplight, covered with dust and exhausted, the Northerners dishevelled and bewildered in their long, once-white robes, and the Southerners in every imaginable type of dress, from homburg hat to balaclava helmet, some with ladies' plastic mackintoshes and dark glasses, they had the appearance more of victims than of volunteers. If we ourselves felt some dismay at the task of forging from this material the stuff of leaders, it was small compared to the astonishment with which the students viewed what confronted them. "I shall say to them," said one youth from Kano, when asked what he would tell his people on his return, "I shall say to them : I saw the sea." Other items on the training programme—First Aid, adult literacy, physical training, road-making, bridge-building, hygiene, discussions, etc.—would be enjoyed or endured : but it was the sea and the mountain that loomed largest in their minds.

Our young men were gifted with a fatal facility for words, at first fascinating—but, in its implications, terrifying. I am not thinking only of the courteous camouflage which disguises cooking under the title of Domestic Economy, or prefers Rural Science to farming; for this is not confined to Africa today. Nor of the more grotesque examples that enlivened our days : the young teacher from a bush school who, when questioned why he was not participating more fully in the course, replied "I think you ought to know, Sir—but I'm an introvert"; and when asked how he had reached this conclusion, replied "Psychology." Or another young teacher—clearly recognized by all as no fanatic for manual work—who brashly volunteered to lecture on "The Dignity of Labour" and proceeded to deliver an admirable homily untroubled by a twinge of self-consciousness. It puzzled me at first that so many of our students, when we discussed with them suggestions for service when they returned to their homes, should choose Literacy, Leprosy or Latrines—a trinity extraordinary not only for its alliteration but its apparent variety of action. Only later did the implications become clear : these were in fact the lightest labours—literacy classes because they were sit-down work, leprosy because what they understood as their task was simply to *tell* the local lepers that they should go to a settlement for treatment and keep clear of the village, and latrines because it was widely known that sanitation was a foible dear to the heart of all British Colonial Officials.

But there were other manifestations, infinitely more disturbing, of the divorce between thought and action, between theory and practice, between what the word means in the dictionary and what it means on the ground. Okoya, a clerk in a Native Administration Office near the Coast, could see no paradox in his asking to be allowed to travel home first class, at government expense, to avoid contact with Hausa traders travelling third class—after attending a course whose principal object was to enable him to establish some basis of understanding with young Hausa Moslems from the North. It seemed, almost invariably, to be the most ardent nationalists and champions of the Four Freedoms in the Colonies who were most outraged at the modest and intelligent claim for a fairer chance for women in Africa, which an outstanding African wife and educationist would put to our students on every course : on those evenings it was not tags from the Declaration of Rights that were quoted, but the dogma that what came from a rib of Adam could not claim equality with man. Artificial respiration was a feature of the First Aid instruction to which all our young men took with an avidity of interest; perhaps not so much in the acquisition of fresh skill, still less from a readiness to render service, as from a desire to be initiated into a mysterious new ritual. But when, on one tragic ascent of the mountain, two students collapsed and lay dying in a hut at 10,000 feet, only eight out of twenty-four in the party could bring themselves to give artificial respiration, the remainder excusing themselves that they felt cold, had headaches or were tired.

Fear killed the two students who died that day on the mountain, and fear unmanned many of those who came on succeeding courses : in face of such physical and spiritual paralysis and obvious anguish of mind, our staff were themselves bewildered, as the customary Anglo-Saxon training devices and remedies were found to be powerless. Nor indeed was this fear only of things physical (it was not the visible, physical aspect of the mountain that inspired the most apprehension) : fear of being against public opinion, in a society still today traditionally intolerant of the nonconformer, and fear of real responsibility in face of emergency could be no less devastating. I used to quote Burke to the effect that all that was needed for the triumph of evil was that good men should remain silent. Again and again we were to see this in the little community of our young men

All photographs by the au

Pela Gombe, a young clerk-interpreter, was typical of the young Nigerians from the Moslem North who attended the training courses at Man O' War Bay. For him and others the first encounter with the sea was only one of many new experiences. The journey to the Cameroons, mixing with Southerners and Christians, leaving off his customary gown and turban—all these would have their impact quite apart from the training itself

Physical recreation featured largely in the earlier part of the training as a means of fitting the young Nigerians in body and mind to play an active role in community development. It was made as adventurous and stimulating as possible, in contrast to the somewhat dreary drill routine familiar in their schools. If teachers could take back only a few ideas for new activities, that was something; better still if they could be led to see the school in its relation to the whole community

Not all the students would return to jobs where they could undertake pioneering work in villages, but all of them—especially those from government posts in towns—needed to be made aware of the problems of community development. And for Europeans in commerce and government service there seemed no less a need to make personal contact with Africans. Here an Administrative Officer and a Third Officer from a West African shipping line are helping students to erect a bamboo bridge

The ascent of Mount Cameroon, 13,350 feet high, was the culmination of the period spent in training. To fortify themselves against the cold the students took every garment in their possession, as well as the jerseys and capes issued for the expedition. Fear of the unknown (and especially of the local ju-ju) seized many; as one student telegraphed to his family: "CLIMBING MOUNT CAMEROON TUESDAY PRAYERS NEEDED"

Over 120 years ago ships of the British Navy, suppressing the African slave trade, anchored in these sheltered waters, known since as Man O' War Bay. On the training courses nearly all the Nigerians learnt to swim and many would take home a bottle of sea-water to show to their countrymen in the interior. But on longer expeditions to sea their anxieties would mount and sometimes they would even cease to paddle

If a sense of common citizenship is to be developed in Nigeria in the face of regional, religious and racial tensions, then new approaches are needed. One approach has been the mixing on these courses of men from all parts of the country, sharing experiences that challenge their manhood and working together for the community on tasks that stir their imagination. Here, on a village project in Ogoja Province, are an Adult Literacy Organizer from the North, a storekeeper from Calabar, Olissa Chukura of the United Africa Company (who toured Britain with the Nigerian Football Team), an educated farmer (generally a contradiction in terms) sent by a missionary from Okigwi, a Fulani Moslem teacher and the Secretary to a Native Authority in the Cameroons

Practical work on some rural development project helped the Nigerians on these courses to grasp the purpose of the training. The idea of the educated few being under any obligation to the community is new to Africa; that rendering such service stripped to the waist might be fun *is stranger still. Students from all walks of life, building a bridge alongside farmers in a remote part of Benue Province, discovered this*

Work on village reconstruction could call for endurance and courage no less than climbing or swimming, and had its moments of triumph too. The broad grin on the face of Sunday Asonye, an Adult Literacy Organizer from Aba, reflects his elation at striking water at last after seven days of labouring in a dark, dank well-shaft beside illiterate villagers with whom he could communicate only by signs

in training—all the more poignant and disturbing in that it mirrored the crisis of events in Nigeria at large.

Inevitably the question would be asked: "What have swimming and canoeing got to do with leadership and village development? There isn't even a river in our Division." Drawing a deep breath one would try to explain that leadership—in social service or any practical form of citizenship—depended on certain qualities of courage and endurance, a readiness to meet with unaccustomed difficulties and the persistence to overcome them; and that our training was not only to impart elementary instruction in bridging and road-making techniques, but to bring out these qualities of leadership. Certainly many paid lip-service to the idea. One headmaster—in fairness, let it be said, one of the best—had our motto, "In all things be men", stencilled on a pillow-case for his wife to embroider on his return. But the notion of an abstract virtue emerging from periods of physical discomfort and perhaps mental terror was beyond others. "Why don't you teach us about team spirit, Sir?" complained one student. "Instead of sending you out with your section in a boat to sea?" "Yes; there are no canoes in my country." Yet undoubtedly some did grasp what was being aimed at, and they were of course the best.

Never at any time did any of us believe that physical toughness was the principal or only aim. In an endeavour to challenge our young Africans to face some of the social problems of today, exercises were devised, under the title of "Civil Emergency", to test their response to the kind of urgent situation which in the past has generally been left to the District Officer to tackle. These Civil Emergencies were staged at night, interrupting the normal evening's programme, and were presented with a realism that on every single occasion completely convinced the students that they were genuine. Thus one evening a sing-song would be interrupted by the arrival of a medical orderly from a nearby plantation-camp, announcing that he had two cases of typhoid on his hands and the telephone line was down: would we help? A section would be detailed to deal with the emergency, an instructor silently accompanying them to report later how they had planned their action—investigating water supply and sanitation, preventing panic among the families, providing for the setting up of a quarantine or isolation camp. In another instance a breathless and apparently distraught runner would bring news that a local village had been burnt out: casualty treatment, relief measures, and rehabilitation were needed.

These evenings were never dull. A stunned silence would greet the announcement of the crisis. On one course last year the section confronted with the typhoid outbreak in the neighbouring labour lines seemed utterly confounded. A young journalist from a somewhat fiery nationalist paper eventually suggested an immediate dispersal of the course to avoid infection, only to be rebuked by a teacher from Calabar with the observation: "We really should do something—after all we have come here to be trained as leaders." If only a few were brought to realize that self-government implied readiness to accept responsibility, at their level, in these situations, then it was worth-while.

So, at last, to the Bush. In camp at Man O' War Bay—despite the expeditions and adventures—there was, of necessity, an institutional atmosphere and a touch, possibly, of the Ivory Tower. Breaking away for the last part of our training to work on some village improvement, the Bush brought our students, and ourselves no less, down to ground. They laboured by day amongst the local people; they slept at night on the floor of Village Council Halls or of improvised huts. This involved us in journeys of 400 miles or more, for it was vital that the village chosen should be ready for their own young men also to work on the project. If they were ready only that we should do the work—be it bridge or road, market or incinerator—it was equally demoralizing for both parties: to give, in that sense, in Africa, is not to help but to corrupt. Where local cooperation was good, many of the students had their eyes opened for the first time to what can be achieved by community effort: "I was ashamed for my own people," wrote later a young Mallam from Bauchi. Where the local turn-out was poor, there was a realization—which could never have come by exhortation alone—that the heart of the problem in Africa is not the technical intricacy of construction or the provision of materials, but the willingness to work at all.

It irked our students that in most places they were taken to be "Government labourers". But that local villagers should find it hard to grasp who these young men were, was not altogether surprising or vitally important; what did matter was that they, the students, should realize why they were doing it. For some, especially those from the larger towns in the South, this encounter with the African Bush was nearly as great a shock as their first

experience of Mount Cameroon and the sea. One student reported later to his Department his conviction that "gentlemen of our calibre should not be required to work in the rain". "Oh, how we suffer" and "too tedious" were phrases frequently heard. Another would ask : "Why have these people been *allowed* to remain so backward? On the Coast we have schools and dispensaries every few miles." I asked him who had first brought education and hospitals to his place at Badagry : the local people or others more fortunate than they? And if so, what was he himself ready to do, as one who had seen the light, to help these people? His silence told only too eloquently of a conception of national unity as something to be given or conferred, rather than something he himself could sweat for.

But it was not all despair. There was Asonye, a young Adult Literacy Organizer, running with almost breathless excitement to announce that at long last water was seeping into the well that he had been working in for days alongside villagers with whom he could communicate only by signs. There was Sunday Dankaro, Cooperative Inspector from Jos, watched silently by hundreds as he climbed a swaying forty-foot tree-trunk to fix a pulley which had slipped. Clearly these jobs of actual service in the Bush called for courage and initiative no less than the more dramatic activities by sea and mountain, but against a background of greater reality. Without this experience some of our young men might have returned home mouthing platitudes about Social Service Leadership in capital letters : as it was, for many the Bush was, metaphorically, too near them, and they to it, for it to evoke any response other than that of revulsion or escape. But from the best —always a minority—there was not lacking a subtler quality, of modesty and humility. There was Mai Jema'a, young headmaster from the Moslem North, who after working seven hours a day on the market-site would give his evenings to teaching basket-work to children in a nearby leper village; and on the same course, Chukura, who held enthralled a group of schoolboys with expert instruction in dribbling and passing, without one of them knowing that their instructor had captained the Nigerian Football Team in Britain four years ago. There was Momodu, our Police Instructor, quietly leaving our bush encampment in the evenings to teach counting to a class of village children. These things are rare enough in Africa today to have brought to me at least a satisfaction equal to the excitement of seeing our men working alongside half-a-thousand loin-clad pagan tribesmen, singing as they strained on the ropes to pull immense trees out of the forest, when it was impossible to resist the infectious enthusiasm or the urgency of their concentrated effort.

In the darker moments the words that came so often to mind were "Peradventure there be ten". The splendidly built teacher from Owerri who suddenly recollected, when names were being asked for a mountain expedition, that he was a 'hunchback'; the lad from a training centre who on his return from a course fooled his Principal into giving him time off for treatment for 'frostbite', when in fact he had never climbed the mountain; the clamour for certificates and group photographs; the dozen daily deeds of petty meanness or plain funk—all these could blind one to the real élite. There was the clerk in an office in Port Harcourt who, when asked on his return what badges he had acquired, showed silently a blistered hand. There was Abubakar, bearded young Chief of Wushishi, who was discovered by a surprised Senior Administrative Officer treading with naked feet in the mud to make bricks with his people. There was Okoro, a young Ibo time-keeper for the Public Works Department at Afikpo (now Assistant Education Secretary for his Native Authority), who inspired every man in his section to make the attempt on the mountain at a time when morale was very low, and later himself declared, with the engaging frankness of the West African : "That's guts!" It was Okoro who spent his most recent leave in a village in Zaria Province in the North, with a Northern House of Assembly Member who had been on the same course with him at Man O' War Bay, and together led the local people on a community development project : for an Ibo clerk to elect to spend his leave thus, in a Moslem community, is something of a phenomenon. And then, in quite a different setting, Lawal, an Accounts clerk in the West African Airways Office in Lagos, who seemed perhaps a little disheartened by the achievements of others who had returned to rural communities. "There's no chance of my doing anything of that kind here," he said. "All I can say is this : previously I would never have been seen carrying any parcel or load in the street; now I buy the bread and other things and take them back for my wife."

Did we ourselves learn anything from all this? Today it is Higher Education and Technical Training on which funds of millions (over £2,000,000 for example at Ibadan University College) and staff numbered by scores are lavished in Africa, whilst schemes

Alec G. Dickson

"Operation Adventure" involved students at Man O' War Bay in expeditions along the coast towards twilight. The best of them responded well to this kind of challenge; but the reaction of others raised fundamental questions. When their own languages have no word for Adventure itself, could the qualities thus demanded be 'transferred' to meet everyday situations requiring civic courage?

of the kind described here struggle for existence or survival. Yet the fundamental problems confronting Africa today seem to defy the academic syllabus and the institutional approach: some, indeed, are products of them. How to persuade the young intelligentsia that they are under an obligation to serve their people: that leadership is not a matter of writing letters to the Press, but frequently of going in the teeth of popular opinion: that cruelty, callousness and corruption in the hospitals cannot be corrected by Directors of Medical Services, but by enlightened public opinion, of which they should be the leaders: that a sense of common citizenship must transcend tribal and family loyalties without sapping them: that there is as much opportunity for social service in the new towns as there is for community development in the rural areas: that the concept of university students stripping to the waist and labouring on some project for the local community or the nation is something to which they should aspire, rather than despise.

It would be a mistake to assume that an endeavour as small as the scheme described here could affect the general scene in any large territory; that would be to attribute to Education, as many Africans themselves do, a far greater influence than it can in fact exert. But if Africa's most urgent need today is a sense of common citizenship, a feeling of belonging together, then any experiment or approach that brings young men of different races to sweat on some common project has its contribution to make. If there be a future for this kind of work, it will lie not in the expansion of schemes such as ours but rather in the extension of its approach to existing training centres and colleges; in the meanwhile it has value as an example and as affording opportunities for discovering what are the real forces that influence conduct—to hold the mirror to the eyes.

Film Portrait of an Italian

by MARIO VERDONE Translated by ANGUS DAVIDSON

In a series of articles that we are publishing with the collaboration of Dr Manvell, Director of the British Film Academy, the first group deals with countries in which film-making has for some time been 'indigenous' in the sense of reflecting the national life. Of this group four have already appeared: on film-making in France, Britain, the United States and Scandinavia. Dr Verdone, a leading Italian film critic, has contributed many articles to the international film magazines and has written a number of books on film subjects; none of them, however, published outside Italy

It was not until after the year 1945 that our national film production gave any authentic portrait of Italian life as it really is, or of the human characteristics of the Italian people. And it is perhaps owing to our film production since then that foreigners have begun to form a more exact idea of the qualities of the Italians, of their gifts and virtues—which, until not very long ago, were confined to expressions, or outbursts, of folk-lore—as well as of their defects, which have rarely been studied or defined within the framework of a more comprehensive estimate of their exuberant humanity.

Production up till World War I was rendered false, from the human point of view, by the vast numbers of false beards and togas. The deduction was that the Italian people wished to assert yet again its love of melodrama, of choruses in fancy dress, as well as of those heroic adventures which found their most exalted Corypheus in the poet D'Annunzio. Nor did the latter fail to exercise his influence on the cinema of that period. He permitted more than twenty film versions of his dramas and novels; he wrote the subtitles for the celebrated film *Cabiria*, conceived and directed by Giovanni Pastrone (Piero Fosco); and also, owing to the success of certain films influenced by his own style, he was indirectly responsible for a whole series of films of historical, and predominantly Roman, type, so markedly characteristic of the Italian cinema of that period as to give the impression that films of this kind were the only ones the Italian public demanded.

The historical film, then, was the most characteristic product of the Italian cinema during its first twenty years; but it was not the only one. There was no lack of comic films, which, however, were often performed by French actors and therefore failed, from the very start, to show the true Italian impress. There were the operetta-films of Lucio d'Ambra, which sought to imbue the brilliant elegance of certain Central European theatrical productions with a touch of genuine (even if sometimes, in an artistic sense, not highly refined) Italian spirit. And there were also films such as *Sperduti nel buio*, *Assunta Spina*, or *Cenere*, in which one stepped out, at last, onto the genuine Naples streets, in which one saw poor people's homes and was present at dramas steeped in maternal love or at outbursts of passionate jealousy: and these were the true source of the realistic film which today is a common heritage, of that realism which has now been widely achieved by the Italian cinema, but which then, in its originality, its rarity, the singularity of its discovery of life in Naples, or Sardinia, or Turin, was the mark of the true *avant-garde* attitude.

In the period between the first and second world wars the portrait of the Italians given by the cinema was not—even then—either exact or convincing. The cinema that expressed, not so much the genuine reality, as the reality that the ruling class wished to present, was in itself a counterfeit portrait. Melodrama still predominated, whether it reappeared in the garments of Verdi or Puccini, or buckled the cothurnus upon the feet of Ancient Roman heroes, as in *Scipione l'Africano*, or was designed to glorify, directly or indirectly, the qualities of the race in films exalting the Fascist movement or drawing a parallel—as in *Campo di maggio* and *Villafranca*—between the great deeds of the past and those of the present. Films were shot in Africa, to celebrate Italy's rise to imperial greatness. A few films escaped, partly, this kind of production, which seemed to be portraying not a true, but a *protected*, reality, a painted façade concealing the true life of our people—films such as Blasetti's *1860* or Mario Camerini's *Cappello a tre punte*. These still remained 'costume' films, but the innate qualities of the Italians who were shown in them were neither embellished nor falsified: they were real, simple, ingenuous Sicilian *picciotti*—the recruits who joined Garibaldi

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The Italian film first became known abroad for its spectacular melodramas set in classical times. Of these The Last Days of Pompeii (1913) (above) *and* Quo Vadis? (below) *were widely shown just before World War I, and they helped to misdirect the cinema into wholly theatrical conventions*

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(Above) Cabiria, *made by Giovanni Pastrone with the assistance of D'Annunzio, was the most influential of the films of classical spectacle that inspired D. W. Griffith.* (Below) *In contrast,* Sperduti nel buio *typified those early films which, though melodramatic in treatment, used real Italian backgrounds*

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(Above) *Under the Fascists, directors continued to make films in the classical tradition, such* Scipione l'Africano, *glorifying the Roman Empire.* (Below) *An Italy recalled to imperial greatn was celebrated in films like* Squadrone bianco, *made in the African territories under Mussolini's r*

National

in 1860 for "the making of Italy"; or they were intelligent, scoundrelly Neapolitans, full of humour; and they provided the first examples of a genuinely Italian film. But there were too many other films—based on Hungarian comedies, on watered-down middle-class stories, on sentimentalized adventures—for the Italian public to take notice of the better ones and give them equal rank with the more celebrated foreign productions. And for a long time Italy failed to recognize herself in her own cinema, preferring American films, full of adventure and expensively mounted, with their sparkling, sumptuous revues and amusing, sophisticated comedies.

Then came the year 1943. The occupation of the Peninsula, half by the Germans and half by the Allies, reduced our production to nothing. The film studios were inhabited by refugees, the offices of the film companies became Allied headquarters. The few directors who were able to resume their activities were forced to improvise arrangements—if they were capable of it—outside the studios, with such means as chance provided. It was thus that Rossellini made *Roma città aperta* and Vittorio De Sica *Sciuscià*, and it was from these films, together with a few others, that a new kind of Italian cinema was born : films that look at things as they are, that are filled with pity for all that the Italians have suffered, that are shot out-of-doors—in open countrysides, in the delta of the Po, in towns —that have ceased to believe in tricks, even if there were a possibility of making use of them, that want to say truthfully what is the real state of our country and our people. In that way cinematographic realism was born; and as it spread, owing to the enthusiasm of its directors for this newly discovered reality —a reality which was no longer painted and protected but which displayed, pitifully, its wounds and its ruins—as it spread throughout the whole Italian peninsula, after the end of the war, this new reality was a revelation to the rest of the world, and to a great extent also to the Italians themselves—even though there are still those who refuse to consider it genuine. Such people are to be found amongst those foreigners who, though they were quite

Luigi Zampa's post-war films have reconstructed the Italian dilemma of the difficult years of Fascism and of the period when German influence dominated Italy. Anni difficili *was such a film*

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Zampa's comedy Vivere in pace *was one of the best-known post-war Italian films. It concerned a rural family trying to avoid trouble while hiding an American Negro soldier from the Germans*

ready, yesterday, to believe in the truth of our uniforms and medals, and today in that of our rags and our ruins, still remain in doubt about the better qualities in our national character. (They are the same people who, during the war, criticized us with contempt for being capricious, for being emotional, for being, sometimes, childish.) Such people are to be found even amongst Italians, people who regard it as an offence that Italian propaganda abroad should be dressed in the garb of *Sciuscià* and *Paisà*.

But, at this point, the Italian cinema—almost irresistibly—began to win its own genuine and rightful victories: the victory of a form of expression which achieved maturity only after the sufferings of the war; the victory of truth, because people now began to believe in the poor shoeblacks, the mothers who see their sons shot dead, the war veterans who have failed to find peace, the families with neither homes nor bread—to believe in them both from an aesthetic point of view, because directors had now succeeded in mastering the form they had previously lacked, and also from a human point of view. The Italian cinema, having won this victory, went forth to win the sympathy of other peoples with a sort of fervour of self-criticism and confession, and now succeeded in giving those of other nations—those who did not know us and often disapproved of us, if they did not actually despise us—a new portrait, a new presentation of our human qualities, upon which they are forced, at least, to reflect.

And what are the characteristics which have become apparent as a result of this documentation—a documentation which has often been redeemed by its lyrical qualities but which has frequently been sincere to the point of cruelty?

Vivere in pace. Zampa's film tells of the true desire of every Italian, when he is not driven and goaded by a dictator who thirsts for glory. Here is the good-natured father of a family (Fabrizi) who does not wish to hurt anyone, neither the American Negro soldier in hiding nor yet the German N.C.O., who both happen to have arrived, one night, beneath his roof; and so, in order to avoid

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One of Vittorio De Sica's later films was a fantasy, Miracle in Milan. *In it life among down-and-outs became a modern fairy story, in which trouble is resolved by a boy who works miracles*

tragedy, he improvises a party, at which there is dancing and laughter and trumpet-playing, until finally the truth can no longer be concealed and bloodshed is bound to follow. However everything comes right: Negroes, Germans, Italians—they are all brothers, or can be; but—again quite by chance—the old father has to pay for everything, as the last soldiers leave the village.

Paisà. More soldiers, at grips with some youthful thieves. One of the soldiers wants to know why the boys live like that, why they are not with their parents, and the little *sciuscià* (the "shoe-shine" boy) answers that his parents "were killed by the bombs". This, therefore, is what Rossellini wishes to say: the child steals, but it is you, soldier, whoever you are, that make him steal, because you killed his father. No less moving is the episode of the monks, in the same film, who decide to pray for their brothers who are not of the same religion—an expression of a profound feeling of pity.

This pacifism, this sense of brotherhood, this feeling of pity—even if the examples so far given scarcely suffice to prove it—are basic qualities of the Italian character; a character tempered by suffering and desirous of a new birth, to a new life and a more tranquil existence; deeply friendly to all who profess themselves friends; on the other hand, prone to depression and disappointment and second thoughts, anxious to do the right thing and, on that account, sometimes, too undecided, too full of doubts; capable of feeling deeply the arguments of the 'other side': hence that inconsistency (really nothing more than humanity carried further, a profounder humanity) which has in fact been portrayed by many film directors. This inconsistency is to be found in the unshaven men in *Miracolo a Milano* whose only ambition is to obtain top-hats like the rich; and again in *Napoletani a Milano,* in which the Neapolitans—in spite of their genuine desire to work, to lead regular lives, to behave well—never, because of the subterfuges and squabbles in which they indulge, succeed in belying the

conditions of their origin—conditions, in any case, of a people that has not enough to eat and not enough work, and which, for that overwhelming reason, is forced to live by a series of stratagems.

Anni difficili and *Anni facili.* These two films seek to present many dramatic incidents in our national life, observed, however, from a point of view which is not that of hatred but is a detached interpretation of a situation containing, simultaneously, elements both of the comic and the tragic, and so bordering on the grotesque; thus we see, in the former, parades of Fascist officials, and, in the latter, the Arcinazzo assembly. They bring to the screen some of those pieces of Fascist bravado which the war appeared to have extinguished.

There is no genuine portrait of the Italian as he is in films such as *Riso amaro, Anna,* or *Non c'è pace tra gli ulivi.* Although they are part of the realist movement, these films contain many ingredients which belong more naturally to a certain type of cosmopolitan commercial cinema. In *Riso amaro* there is a gangsterism which really is not a very typical part of Italian life; *Anna* is made on the characteristically foreign 'star' system; while in *Non c'è pace tra gli ulivi* the picture of a province of Latium is falsified by over-aestheticism.

The first cinematographic trip through the Italian peninsula was made by Rossellini with *Paisà*: the episodes, which followed the movement of the battle-front step by step, were placed in Sicily, at Naples, Rome, Florence, Bologna, and in the Po delta. Later there were films which set out to discover the infinite aspects of the Italian landscape : *Patto col diavolo* was made in the forests of Calabria; *La terra trema* amongst the fishermen of Acitrezza in Sicily; *In nome della legge* and *Cammino della speranza* also in Sicily; *Stromboli* and *Vulcano* on the islands that bear the same names; *Caccia tragica,* amongst the agricultural cooperatives of Emilia; *Riso amaro* in the rice-fields of Lombardy; *Senza pietà* at Livorno; *Ombre sul Canal Grande,* in the less known, less tourist-ridden parts of

Perhaps Roberto Rossellini's finest film was Paisà, *episodes of the last phase of the war when the Allies were fighting their way up Italy. A scene from one of the stories, set in a monastery*

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The contemporary Italian film, and especially those of the neo-realist movement, made the countryside as well as the cities a vital part of what was shown on the screen. (Above) Non c'è pace tra gli ulivi *was set in Latium;* (below) Riso amaro (Bitter Rice), *featuring Silvana Mangano, in Lombardy*

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(Above) *Sicily became the setting for a kind of Italian "Western" in the case of* In nome della legge, *whose subject was the banditry for which the island is still famous.* (Below) Cristo proibito, *set against a Tuscan background, was a melodrama of vengeance. It was directed by Curzio Malaparte*

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(Above) Sciuscià *was one of De Sica's earlier neo-realist films, made in association with Zavattini, about the street-boys of Rome. In contrast to this savage portrayal of social conditions is* (below) Domenica d'agosto, *Emmer's gay film of working-class Romans spending a Sunday by the sea*

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Among the post-war character actors and actresses in Italian films Anna Magnani and Aldo Fabrizi are best-known, especially for their initial work in the neo-realist films. (Above) *Fabrizi is seen in the family comedy* Prima Comunione. *He acted a very different role as the priest in* Roma città aperta (Rome Open City), *a film in which Anna Magnani* (right), *as the fiancée of a leader in the Resistance, gave one of her most moving performances*

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Venice; *Cristo proibito* in Tuscany; *Cronaca di un delitto* in the steelworks of Terni, as had already occurred twenty years earlier with Ruttmann's *Acciaio*; *Processo a una città*, *Napoli milionaria*, and *Teresa Marturano* at Naples; *Macchina ammazzacattivi* and *Miracolo* on the Amalfi coast; *Miracolo a Milano* and *Napoletani a Milano* in the Lombard capital.

More frequent, naturally, were films portraying Rome. Rome became often the true inspiration both of directors and writers. De Sica and Zavattini, like Rossellini before them with *Città aperta*, made Rome the setting of their *Ladri di biciclette*, *Sciuscià*, and *Umberto D.*: they have shown something of the awe-inspiring quality of incommunicableness that the capital suggests (*Ladri di biciclette*), and of the unmitigated loneliness of the poorest and most helpless elements of its population; they have seen the conditions under which the inhabitants lived during the foreign troops' long stay (*Sciuscià*), and the difficulties of the less fortunate during the present epoch (*Umberto D.*). *Bellissima*, more than any other, contains an extremely colourful portrait of the Roman woman, with Anna Magnani gesticulating, untidy-haired, impetuous, generous; and other types—fat, cumbersome, noisy—amongst her female neighbours. Such women form the 'chorus' which remains in shadow so that the full light may fall upon those who are most attractive and most representative of Italian feminine beauty today, actresses such as Silvana Mangano, Elena Rossi Drago, Gina Lollobrigida.

Gesticulation and imitative expression appear always to have been essentially Italian characteristics. How eloquent are the movements of Eduardo de Filippo's and Fabrizi's hands, in *Napoli milionaria* or *Prima comunione*! So, also, with Angelo Musco, in his Sicilian films. Inimitable too, in a similar manner, is the play of mimicry on the face of the comedian Totò (*Guardie e ladri*).

Actors and actresses have been the Italian film-directors' best possible collaborators in the period since the war. It is very possibly due to artists such as Anna Magnani and Aldo Fabrizi that the neo-realist movement took shape so rapidly and made its mark with a few films such as *Città aperta*. In Fabrizi and Anna Magnani, whom we had already met, somewhere about the year 1943 (the former in the part of a cab-driver in *Ultima carrozzella* and of a tram-conductor in *Avanti c'è posto*, the latter as a fishwife in *Campo dei fiori*), there existed, already, the types which we were to find again in realist films. And, since directors wanted new, expressive faces, taken from everyday life, and not performers who were already known in the garb of middle-class *femmes fatales* or valiant warriors or austere figures from the Roman Empire, they often had recourse to such types, as production increased; they collected waiters and street-urchins, fishermen, labourers, unemployed workmen, young girls, servant-maids and peasant women, whom they persuaded to face the camera, and who were often made to play truant for just one film, after which they might find themselves unable to get work either in their former occupation or in the cinema; sometimes, however, they were able to keep permanent positions, even if humble ones, in the various productions.

Italian youth has been widely represented amongst these types: in *Sotto il sole di Roma*, in *È primavera*, in Castellani's *Due soldi di speranza*, it showed itself generous and gay, anxious to 'shine', sharpened by war experiences but still retaining its belief in good feeling. In Emmer's films, too, youth has appeared in shoals: in *Domenica d'agosto*, with its holiday jaunts to Ostia, in *Ragazze di Piazza di Spagna*, with young sempstresses from the Roman workrooms, in *Terza liceo* with boy and girl students.

These represent the second generation with regard to the 'young men' of our films of twenty years ago, whom we watched going through the spiritual crises of *Rotaie*, or in the ingenuous, honest poverty of *Uomini che mascalzoni!*—De Sica, at that time, being a bright young man who could sing a popular *aria* with plenty of feeling.

The films we have recorded here are those that afford Italian spectators a mirror in which to recognize themselves, and that offer the contemporary foreign public a product of a typically native kind which they could not have made for themselves. And the Italian realist film of today, closely related to its own landscape and providing an authentic picture of the character of our people, has become, owing to its own peculiar and unmistakable qualities, a medium of great international *réclame*.

It is easier to understand, now, those words written in 1922 by an Italian critic, S. A. Luciani: "The only way to interest a foreign public is to offer it a product which it is *not capable of making for itself*; not to give it back an awkward imitation of its own production. This is the one condition upon which Italian production can find an international market and an international public."